UNIT 15 CLASSICAL LIBERALISM

Structure

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15.1 INTRODUCTION

Liberalism is the dominant ideology of the present-day Western world. The history of England, Western Europe and America for the last 300 years is closely associated with the evolution and development of liberal tliought. Liberalism was the product of the climate of opinion that emerged at the time of the Renaissance and Reformation in Europe. As an ideology and a way of life, 'it reflected the economic, social and political aspirations of the rising middle class which later on became the capitalist class'. In the sixteenth and the seventeenth centuries, when the feudal system was cracking up, a new political system was taking its place. The establishment of the absolute nation-states in England and Europe gave birth to a kind of political system in which the authority of the king was absolute. The beginning of liberalism was a protest against the hierarchical and privileged authority and monarchy – a protest which involved every aspect of life. The main slogan of the protest was freedom – freedom from every authority which is capable of acting capriciously and arbitrarily along with freedom of the individual to develop all of his potentialities as a human being endowed with reason. To achieve the liberty of the individual and to challenge the authority of the state, liberalism demanded liberty in every field of life: intellectual, social, religious, cultural, political and economic etc. The central problem with which these liberties were concerned is the relationship between the individual and the state. The negative or the classical aspect of liberalism remained dominant for a very long time. The initial aim of liberalism was more destructive than constructive; its purpose was not to elucidate positive aims of civilization, but to remove hindrances in the path of the development of the individual. Till the later half of the 19th century, it was a progressive ideology fighting against cruelty, superstitions, intolerance and arbitrary governments. It fought for the rights of man and of nations. During the last hundred years, it had to face the challenges of other ideologies and political movements such as democracy, marxism, socialism and fascism. It absorbed democracy and socialism to a great extent in the name of the welfare state, fought fascism tooth and nail but could not overcome marxism. In the mid-twentieth century, in the face of marxism, it became an ideology of status quo, defensive and conservative, even counter revolutionary, out of touch with and usually hostile to the radical and revolutionary movements of the day, However, with the fall of the socialist regimes in the former Soviet Union and Eastern Europe and the withering away of socialist ideology, classical liberalism (in its new avatar of libertarianism) is once again becoming the dominant ideology of the contemporary world.

15.2 WHAT IS LIBERALISM?

Liberalism is too dynamic and flexible a concept to be contained in a precise definition. Right from its inception, it has been continuously changing, adding something and discarding the other. As Alblaster writes, 'liberalism should be seen not as a fixed and absolute term, as a collection of unchanging moral and political values but as a specific historical movement of ideas in the modern era that began with Renaissance and Reformation. It has undergone many changes and requires a historical rather than a static type of analysis.' Similarly, Laski writes, 'it (Liberalism) is not easy to'describe, much less to define, for it is hardly less a habit of mind than a body of doctrine'. To quote Hacker, 'Liberalism has be come so common a term in the vocabulary of politics that it is a brave man who will try to give it a precise definition. It is a view of the individual, of the state, and of the relations between them'. Almost the same view is expressed by Grimes, 'liberalism is not a static creed or dogma, for dogmatism provides its own restraints. It is rather a tentative attitude towards social problems which stresses the role of reason and human ingenuity... liberalism looks ahead with a flexible approach, seeking to make future better for more people, as conservatism looks back, aiming mainly to preserve the attainment of the past.' Although the liberal ideas are about 300 years old, the word 'liberalism' did not come into use till the beginning of the nineteenth century. According to Richard Wellheim, 'liberalism is the belief in the value of liberty of the individual'. According to Sartori, 'very simply, liberalism is the theory and practice of individual liberty, juridical, defence and the constitutional state'. Bullock and Shock emphasize the belief in freedom and conscience as the twin foundations of liberalism. Grime writes, 'It represents a system of ideas that aim at the realization of the pluralist society, favouring diversity of politics, economics, religion and other cultural life. It seeks in its simplest sense to advance the freedom of man... it seeks to increase individuality of man by increasing his area of choice and decision.' Similarly, Laski writes, 'liberalism implies a passion for liberty; and that the passion may be compelling. it requires a power to be tolerant; even sceptical about opinion and tendencies you hold to be dangerous which is one of the rarest human qualities'. Hallowell defines liberalism as 'the embodiment of the demand for freedom in every sphere of life – intellectual, social, religious, political 2nd economic'. Schapiro talks of liberalism as an attitude of life – sceptical, experimental, rational and free. According to Koerner, 'liberalism begins and ends with the ideals of individual freedom, individual human rights and individual human happiness. These remain central to the creed whatever may be the economic and political arrangements of liberal democracy society'. According to Heater, 'liberty is the quintessence of liberalism. For the liberal, it is the individual who counts, not society at large or segment of it, for only by placing priority on the rights of the individual can freedom be ensured'.

Andrew Hacker in his book ***Political*** *Theory* has distinguished four types of liberalism: namely, utopian liberalism, free market liberalism, democratic liberalism, and reformist liberalism. On the whole, according, to him, liberalism stands for i) free life as the prime pursuit of politics, ii) state's task is to eschew coercion and to encourage the conditions for this free life. Similarly, Barbara Goodwin in her book *Using Political Ideas,* lists the following ingredients of liberalism: i) man is free, rational, self- improving and autonornous, ii) government is based on consent and contract, iii) constitutionalism and the rule of law, iv) freedom as choice which includes the right to choose government from among different representatives, v) equality of opportunity, vi) social justice based upon merit, and vii) tolerance.

In short, liberalism has a narrow and a broad perspective. At a narrow level, it is seen from political and economic points of view, whereas at the broader level, it is like a mental attitude

that attempts in the light of its presuppositions to analyse and integrate the varied intellectual, moral, religious, social, economic and political relationships of human beings. At the social level, it stands for secularism, freedom in relation to religion and morality. It lays stress on the value of free individual conscious of his capacity for self-expression and unfettered development of his personality. At the economic level, it implies the ideal of free trade coupled with internal freedom of production. At the political level, it stands for political liberty and the right to property, constitutional limited government, protection of the rights of the individual and anti-authoritarianism.

15.3 CHARACTERISTICS OF LIBERALISM

From the above discussion, it is now clear that liberalism is not merely a political concept, but also a socio-economic, cultural and ethical concept. It can be understood through certain characteristics evolved during its long history. John Hallowell has pinpointed the following characteristics of classical liberalism:

i) a belief in the absolute value of human personality and spiritual equality of the individual;

ii) a belief in the autonomy of the individual will;

iii) a belief in the essential rationality and goodness of man;

iv) a belief in certain inalienable rights of the individual, pal-titularly, the rights of life, liberty and property;

v) that state comes into existence by mutual consent for the purpose of protection of rights;

vi) that the relationship between the state and the individual is a contractual one;

vii) that social control can best be secured by law rather than command;

viii) individual freedom in all spheres of life - political, economic, social, intellectual and religious;

ix) the government that governs the least is the best;

x) a belief that truth is accessible to man's natural reason.

15.4 RISE OF LIBERALISM

Liberalism as a whole was a massive movement that made itself felt in all the countries of Western Europe and in America, but its most characteristic development took place in England. It was also strong in I-lolland and Spain. In Germany, the liberal philosophy remained for the most part academic. In France, liberalism far more than in England, tended to be the social philosophy of a class, rather aristocratic in its attitude towards the masses, and mainly critical in function since it could hardly aspire to carry through a national policy, Political liberalism here arose as a protest against tyranny, but the working class movement which was radical and socialist in its outlook and which also incorporated the marxist throught of class struggle was a great hindrance to the liberal doctrine taking deep roots in France. Only in England, which throughout the nineteenth century was the most highly industrialized country in the

world, did liberalism achieve the status at once of a national philosophy and national policy. It provided the principles for an orderly and peaceful transition, first to complete freedom for industry and the enfranchisement of the middle class and ultimately, to the enfranchisement of the working class and their protection against the most serious hazards of industry. For the proper study of liberalism, it is customary to divide it into two periods known as 'classical or negative liberalism' and 'welfare or positive liberalism'. In this unit, we shall study classical liberalism. The division is necessary because in its initial stage, liberalism presented itself as a philosophy of the rising middle class, but in its later stage, it developed into a philosophy of a national community whose ideal was to protect and conserve the interests of all classes. Classical liberalism was the product of the revolutionary era. It championed the cause of the newly emerging bourgeoisie against absolute monarchical and feudal aristocracy. It was highly individualistic. Individual and social interests were seen as contradictory. On the other hand, the distinctive feature of welfare liberalism was a recognition of the reality and the value of social and community interests (along with individual interests). Its attempt was not only to conserve political and civil Iiberties which individualism of the early era had embodied, but also to adapt them to the progressive changes brought about by industrialism and nationalism. Now, let us have a look at classical liberalism.

15.5 IDEOLOGY OF CLASSICAL LIBERALISM – VIEWS ABOUT MAN, SOCIETY, ECONOMY AND STATE

Classical Iiberalism is called by different names like negative liberalism, individualistic liberalism, *laissez faire* liberalism, free market liberalism, integral liberalism, original liberalism etc. The modern period began with the l6th century. During this period, against the socio-economic, political and cultural system of the medieval period, Renaissance and Reformation movements emerged, scientific and technological advances took place, a new economic class – which was later called the capitalist class – came into being; in the political sphere, instead of feudal states, new nation-state emerged, and changes were seen in all the spheres of social system. In such an atmosphere, a new philosophy – that of classical liberalism – emerged which found expression in the writings of various thinkers. Prominent among whom were Thomas Hobbes, John Locke, Adam Smith, Malthus, Ricardo, Bentham, James Mill, J.S. Mill, Herbert Spencer, William Senior and Thomas Paine.

The social structure of the middle ages was based on the hereditary principle of feudalism. The particular feature of which was that everybody had a master above him: the peasant had the landlord, the landlord had the feudal lord, the feudal lord had the king, the king had the Pope, and the Pope had Christ above him. The Reformation Movement broke the authority of the church. The revival of commerce and the creation of new forms of wealth began to challenge the ascendancy of the nobility and the demand for political and social reforms that would improve their status and their business, freedom from restrictions such as the medieval notion of just price, from the condemnation of lending and borrowing money at interest, and from taxes that constituted barriers to free trade. The rise and growth of towns and of a new social class, revival of literature and art, birth of modern science and pliilosophy and the rise of large centralized states created a new epoch. The medieval ages were based on the privileges of a few in which individual liberty, rights, equality etc were totally absent. The birth of the modern period starts with the protest against this absolute and privileged authority, a kind of protest which was prevalent in all spheres of life and which challenged all the restrictions and emphasized the autonomy of the individual, his liberty and his rationality. The protest expressed

itself in the form of secularism against religious fundamentalism, free market capitalism irr the field of economics, a government based upon consent in the field of politics, and individualism and humanism in the field of sociology.

Liberalism is associated with those progressive ideas which accompanied the gradual breakdown of traditional social hierarchies. Historically, it was a modernizing force. It was opposed to what was traditional and feudal and friendly to the new emerging social order of bourgeois society. Born in opposition to the world dominated by monarchy, aristocracy and Christianity, liberalism opposed the arbitrary power of the kings and privileges of the nobility based upon birth. It questioned the whole tradition of a society in which man had a fixed station in eye. By contrast, it favoured an open meritocracy where every energetic individual could rise to respectability and success. Liberalism believed in a contractual and competitive society and a free market economic order. It favoured free thinking, rationalism and speculative mode of thought. It believed in change, dynamism, gmwth, mobility, accumulation and competition Classical liberalism emphasized the autonomous individual. The idea that man is a masterless man was an entirely novel conception. It considered marl as selfish, egoistic, alienated but at the same time rational. It had faith in the absolute value and worth and spiritual equality of individual's. It believed that individuality can be increased by increasing the choice of man and towards this end, external restraint should be minimal. It maintained that the individual is the basis of all socio-econoniic and political systems. Man was considered as the measure of everything. It believed that man was endowed with certain inalienable natural rights based upon the law of nature; prominent among these were the rights to life, liberty and property – tlze rights which were not dependent upon the mercy of the state or society, but were inherent in the personality of the individual.

At the core of classical liberalism was the liberty of the individual – liberty from every form of authority which acts arbitrarily and capriciously, and liberty in all spheres of human life. But what is important to note is that liberty here was viewed as a negative thing i.e. liberty as absence of restraints. Only the individual knows what is best for him. For the development of his personality, he requires ckrtain freedoms from arbitrary authorities which act against his will. It was liberty both from the society and from the state. It was 'liberty from' and not 'liberty to'. Hobbes describes it as the 'silence of laws'. Berlin defines it as 'absence of coercion'. Milton Friedman terms it as 'absence of coercion of man by state, society or his fellowmen'. Flew defines it as absence of 'social and legal constraints'. According to Nozic, it is a natural right to 'self-ownerqhip'. Again, absence of restraints had very wide meaning. Restraints could be political, economic, civil, personal etc. The purpose of law was not to take away liberty, but to regulate it. Law and liberty were considered anti-thetical.

Since the individual was taken as a unit and the single human being as a natural unit, classical liberalism viewed society not as a natural, but an *artificial* institution. It was seen as being composed of atom like autonomous individuals with wills and interests peculiar to themselves. Society was an artificial institution meant to serve certain interests of the individuals. It was an aggregate of individuals, a collection, a crowd where each was pursuing his own self interest. Hobbes compared society with a sack of corn. They are associate, yet separate. Bentham also viewed society as a fictitious body, with no interest of its own. apart from the interests of members composing it. It was considered a creation of the individual will based upon contract and a means to enrich 'individual ends'. Macpherson lzas termed this view of society as a 'free market society', a meeting place of self-interested individuals, a society based upon free will, competition and contract. A good society was that which guaranteed the liberty of the individual

to maximize the self and its freedom of action. Society was a means with individual as an end; it had no necessary unity, no separate interest and existence of its own apart from the individual interests. It was a free or open society.

The economic theory of classical liberalism found expression in a new 'science of political economy'. Originated in France by a group of thinkers, who were known as Physiocrats, it found classical expression in Adam Smith's *'Wealth* of Nafions'. Like political liberalism, the new science of economics reflected the aspirations and the way of life of the merchant and the manufacturing middle class. In essence, it advocated economic freedom, especially freedom from government regulations fostered by mercantilist theory. Physiocracy which means 'rule of nature' was described as 'the science of the natural order'. The physiocrats believed that all social relations into which men enter 'far from being haphazard are admirably regulated and controlled... they are the self-evident laws...they are the rules of justice, of morality, of conduct, useful to all and to each. Neither men nor government make them nor can make them. They recognize them as conforming to the Supreme Reason which govern this Universe...these laws are irrevocable. They pertain to the essence of men and things, they are the expression of the will of God. By discerning its laws and living in accordance with them, one achieves the happiness ordained for him by God. Secondly, the physiocrats argued that liberty is inseparable from property and the preservation of property is the primary duty of the state. 'The social laws established by the supreme being prescribe only the preservation of the right to property and that of liberty which is inseparable from it'. The function of the government is simply to secure the individual's natural right to liberty and property. The government should refrain from any interference with the economy, since such interference could not only be arbitrary, but also an unnecessary interference in the laws of natural order. *Laissez faire, laissez aller, le mond va du lui-meme* was the slogan (let things be alone because the world is self-regulating).

This new science of political economy conceived by physiocrats culminated in the classical economic liberalism of Adam Smith and was supplemented by Ricardo, Malthus, James Mill and others. The physiocrats believed that if individuals were left alone to follow their enlightened self-interest, economic prosperity would result. Likewise, Adam Smith believed that 'natural economic institutions were not merely good, they were providential. Divine providence has endowed man with adesire to better his own condition...so that man following where this desire leads is really accomplishing the beneficent designs of God Himself'. Smith discovered that self-interest and benevolence were in a pre-established and harmonious accord. By seeking one's own interest, one promotes by some mysterious process the welfare of all. There is no conflict between the individual self-interest and social welfare. 'Every man as long as lie does not violate the laws ofjustice, ought to be left perfectly free to pursue his own interests in his own way and to bring both his industry and capital into coinpetition with those of any other man or order of men'. Accordingly, Smith restricted the activities of the state to the bare minimum such as security of life, limb and property of the individual and some public works.

The individual right to private property was central to the economic theory of classical liberalism i.e. the right to freely own or dispose of, to buy or sell, to hire labour and make profit, Free trade, free contract, competition, free economy, free market and market society, natural right to private property were the hallmarks of this theory, It was based on the assumption that economics and politics are mutually independent or are only indirectly related through

individual psychology. It believed that if the individual is left alone to follow his own enlightened self-interest, economic prosperity would result

The perfect institution for the exchange of goods and services was the market. The market perfectly embodied the new economic individualism. Market relations abolished the traditional constraints on freedom 'to raise and invest capital, to fund loan and earn interest, sell property and reap profit, hire and fire labour'. The state was not suited to the management of economic affairs. As Adam Smith wrote 'no two characters seem more inconsistent than those of trader and sovereign'. Similarly, Bentham also believed in the self-regulating uncontrolled economy in which the state had virtually no role to play. In the name of utilitarianism, he demanded free trade, freedom of occupation, unrestricted competition, inviolable private property and other individualist reforms. Thus, in the economic sphere, liberalism gave the pure economic theory of capitalist advance and the theory served well the economic interests of the bourgeoisie. As Laski writes, 'the whole ethos of capitalism, in a word, is its effort to free the owner of the instruments of production from the need to obey rules which inhibit his full exploitation of them. The rise of liberalism is the rise of a doctrine which seeks to justify the operation of that ethos'.

At the political level, liberalism sought to erect a theory of state based upon the subjective claims of the individual rather than upon objective reality. The only basis of civil society which early classical liberalism could conceive was contract or an agreement between the individual and the state. The contract theory had three inter-related elements: i) the state is not created by Cod, but is the creation of man, ii) it is not a natural institution, but an artificial institution and iii) the basis of the state and political obligation is the consent of the individuals. Classical liberalism did not regard the state as a natural, necessity arising out of man's needs and social nature with a purpose transcending the subjective wills of the individual, but us an artificial institution based upon the egoistic nature of man. The state comes into existence by mutual consent for the sole purpose of preserving and protecting the rights of the individual and the relationship between the state and the individual is a contractual one. When the terms of the contract are violated, individuals not only have the right, but also the responsibility tu revolt and establish a new government. Through the notion of consent, liberalism tried to safeguard the rights and liberties of the people and check the arbitrariness of the rulers. Consent was also made a precondition of the state, because liberalism believed that the authority of the state was a restraint upon individual freedom and it should be checked as far as possible.

Inspite of being the creation of man, classical liberalism saw the state in purely negative terms. It was termed as a necessary evil. It was necessary because only it could provide law, order, security of life and property, but it was an evil also because it was an enemy of human liberty. Since liberalism considered the rights and liberties of the individual as sacred, any increase in the functions of the state was seen as a decrease in the liberty of the individual. Hence, the state was seen as having a negative function; to provide security of life and property and leave the individual free to pursue his good in his own way. The philosophy of the state as a necessary evil and the self- regulating economy left a very limited role for the government. The liberal slogan was 'that government is the best which governs the least'. To illustrate this point further, Adam Smith restricted the functions of the state to: i) 'protect the society from violence and invasion, ii) protect every member of society from injustice and oppression of every other member and iii) to erect and maintain certain public works and certain public institutions in which the individual may not be interested because it would be unprofitable'. Similarly, William Senior wrote 'the essential business of government is to afford defence, to

protect the community against foreign and domestic violence and fraud'. Bentham reduced the task of the government to security and freedom. Another writer Thomas Paine said 'while society in any state is a blessing, government even in its best state is but a necessary evil'. Herbert Spencer advocated the doctrine of survival of the fittest and pleaded that the state should have a minimum role in the socio- economic sphere.

As a political theory, liberalism can be traced to the political thought of Thomas Hobbes, but its clear expression was found in the thought of John Locke. Locke declared that no one can be subjected to the political power of another without his own consent. For him, freedom meant freedom from the state. State and government were deemed as restrictive institutions. Locke propounded a theory of natural rights – of life, liberty and property- for the protection of which the state comes into being. He conceived rights as prior to the state. The basis of the state is a contract which the ruler or the ruled can get rid of. Government is the result of individual will, civil society is sovereign and the state is an artificial institution created for certain specific ends like order, security, protection of the rights of life, liberty and property. State was given a very limited sphere of action, namely, establishment of law and order, suppression of violence, protection of rights and property. The American and French revolutions of the eighteenth century were largely influenced by liberal ideology. Like Locke, Thomas Paine also denied that the state has unlimited absolute power and asserted the political liberty of the community and the defence of the individual against the possible tyranny of the monarch. Similarly, Montesquieu endeavoured to do for France what Locke had done for England in the seventeenth century as a liberal; his first concern was individual freedom and he endeavoured to discover checks on political authority by means of which it might be secured. To this end, lie developed a theory of the separation of powers which had a far reaching influence.

The nineteenth century produced a group ofwriters called philosophical radicals like Bentham, James Mill and J.S. Mill. The doctrine they propounded is known as 'Utilitarianism' which dominated liberal thought for more than half a century. Utilitarianism provided a new theoretical foundation to liberalism. It was based upon the theory of hedonism. It means that all men seek pleasure and avoid pain. Pleasure is tlie only thing desirable in and for itself. Wealth, position. power, health and even virtue itself is desired merely as a means to the ultimate end of pleasure. What gives pleasure is utility and is desirable and what gives pain does not have utility and is avoided. In his opening paragraph of his *Introduction to the Principles* of *Morals and Legislation*, Bentham wrote. 'Nature has placed mankind under the governance of two sovereign masters, pain and pleasure. It is for them alone to point out what we ought to do as well as to determine what we shall do'. However, all happiness being impossible, man must seek the greatest happiness in terms of quantity. Similarly, the greatest happiness of all the people being impossible, we must seek the greatest happiness of the greatest number. Bentham applied the principle and methods of utility to the spheres of law, politics and the state.

For Bentham, state is an instrument devised by man to satisfy his desires and reflects his will. The sole justification for it is that it provides peace, order, security and helps them to satisfy these desires. It is a means to promote happiness of the individual. Utility in the context of the state is expressed through law. It is law which unites people together and puts them on tlie road of utility. Bentham considered law as an important instrument of expression of utility and regarded legislation as the only device through which utility could be attained. Hence, he considered the state as a law making body because it is only through law that the state rewards or punishes so as to increase happiness and decrease pain. The purpose of law is to regulate

the motive of self- interest. Mere morality is not sufficient and unless law comes into operation, bad things cannot be out of place. Bentham believed in the command theory of law and regarded it as the command of the sovereign. The sovereign is the source of law. All men are equal in the eyes of law and all have equal rights as regards the promotion of happiness. But inspite of the fact that the state is an instrument to promote happiness of the individual, the character of the state, according to Bentham, remains negative. Believing that men are moved by their self interest and everybody is the best judge of his pleasure or pain. Bentham came to the conclusion that the 'main function of the state was to remove all the institutional restrictions on the free action of the individual... the purpose of the state is not to foster and promote but only to restrain them from indulging in activities which affect the general happiness by punishing them'. To increase the national wealth, means of subsistence and enjoyment, the general rule is that to achieve the greatest happiness of the greatest number, 'nothing should be done or attempted by the government'. Bentham reduced the functions of the stale only to security and freedom. In other words, to promote the happiness of the individual, the state is a negative institution; simultaneously, along-with conceiving the state,as an instrument of promoting security and freedom'. Bentham fore-saw the need and aspirations of the modern democratic state. He preferred the democratic form of' government because a representative democracy was more likely to secure the greatest happiness of the greatest number by adopting constitutional devices like suffrage, annual parliaments, vote by ballot, election of prime minister by the parliament and the appointment of civil servants through competitive examinations. Also, he favoured the unicameral legislature, vote by secret ballot, recall of public officials, civil and criminal code and prison reforms. These contributions went a long way in the development of the liberal perspective of the state.

The tradition ofclassical liberalism was further extended by Bentham's pupil J.S. Mill. Mill's essay *On Liberty (1859)* which has long been held to be the finest and the most moving essay on liberty is a powerful and an eloquent plea for liberty of thought, liberty of exprssion and liberty of action not merely against the interference of the state, but also against the pressure of society, public opinion and conventions in the affairs of the individual. The liberty he sought to defend was the liberty of the individual to develop, enrich and expand his personality. As such it is not surprising that he pleads that the individual should be left free to realize his own interest the way he likes, provided he does not interfere with the similar freedom of others. He defines liberty as 'pursuing our own good in our own way so long as wc do not attempt to deprive others of their or impede their efforts to obtain it'. So defined liberty is a means to an end, the end being one's own good. I-le further writes 'the only part of the conduct of any one for which he is amenable to society is that which concerns others. In the part which merely concerns himself, his independence is, of' right, absolute. Over himself, over his body and mind, the individual is sovereign.. .the only purpose for which power can be rightfully exercised, over any member of the civilized community against his will is to prevent harm to others'.

Mill divided the activities of the individual into two parts: self-regarding and other-regarding. The self-regarding action may include those matters which affect the individual himself, having no concern with others. While the individual was to be free in doing those things which affected himself alone, his independence was restricted in those cases which had a bearing on others. Society has no right to use force or compulsion in regard to matters which affect the individual alone arid have no concern with others. In the self-regarding functions, Mill included (i) the inward domain of consciousness demanding liberty of conscience in the most comprehensive sense, liberty ofthought and feeling; absolute freedom of opinion and sentiment

on all subjects practical or speculative, scientific moral or theological; (ii) liberty of tastes and pursuits, of framing a plan of our life to suit our own character, of doing things without impediments from other fellow creatures so long as they do not harm others, (iii) liberty of combination among individuals; freedom to unite for any purpose not involving harm to others.

On the whole, Mill's argument rested upon a negative concept of freedom. He objected to social control over what he regarded as the self -regarding activities of the individual because he regarded all restraints as evil. According to him, tlie individual is not responsible to society for his (action, in so far as they concern the interests of no person other than himself. He believed that social progress depended upon giving to each individual the fullest opportunity for the free development of his personality. He was convinced that human personality can develop and expand only in an atmosphere of freedom. From it, it necessarily follows that freedom consists in the absence of restraints, the best thing for the individual is that he should be: left to pursue his good in his own way. Although the artificial division between self-regarding and other-regarding functions of the individual was not accepted by the latter generation of liberal writers like Green, Hobhouse, Lindsay, Laski etc, the importance of Mill lies in his emphasis on the fact that social and political progress depended largely on the potentialities of the individual and his free choice. Mill was fully convinced that any increase in the power of tlie state – irrespective of its form – was anti-thetical to the liberty of the individual and the most valuable element in human life was spontaneous choice, anything which is done by a compulsory power diminishes the scope of that choice and this infringes upon liberty. Similarly, his plea for freedom of speech, thought and expression became fundamental tenets of liberal philosophy.

We can conclude this discussion on classical liberalism by the views of L.T. Hobouse. In his book Liberalism, Hobhouse pointed out certain basic principles sf liberalism. According to him, these principles were evolved as a consequence of the struggle of the rising middle class against feudal ism, aristocrats and clergymen. In short, these principles were: i) Personal liberty: the essence of liberalism lies in individual liberty. This doctrine covered several rights and duties of the individual. It was to secure freedom of speech, discussion, writing, freedom of thought and faith. The American Declaration of Independence, the English Rill of Rights and the Habeas Corpus Act, the petition of rights were all meant to secure these freedoms. Personal liberty also meant that there should be no discrimination on grounds of caste, colour, creed, sex, race and economic position. ii) Civil liberty: according to this principle, the government must be conducted not by the arbitrary will of any one individual or class but by law. 'This was necessary to counteract the evil of oppression of the Icings or feudal lords and churchmen. Milton's libertarian doctrine declared that all human beings are by nature born free and endowed with reason and the right to work out their own destiny and that the rulers must exercise their authority under the restraints of law. Similar was the declaration of Jefferson that 'all men are endowed by their Creator witli certain inalienable rights to secure for which governments are instituted' arid which appears substantially as an expression of tlie first principle of liberalism; iii) Economic liberty: it meant that the individual should have the right to property and contact. This freed the individual from economic restraints and economic liberty for classical liberalism was the acceptance of the pol icy of laissez faire which meant that the state should intervene as little as possible in the econornic affairs; iv) Political liberty and popular sovereignty: they mean that all men should have rights and all must be enabled to enjoy equal opportunities. These two concepts were described by Hobhouse as the crown and glory of liberalism. The doctrine of popular sovereignty was stressed by tlie Declaration of Independence in .America. It meant sovereignty of the people, it vested in them the supreme power of political decision

and action. Concepts of political freedom and popular sovereignty led to many far reaching consequences and formation of principles such as universal suffrage, direct election of public officials, public accountability ofgovernors, annual parliaments, subordination of the executive to the legislature; v) and last but not the least, classical liberalism also included domestic freedom, administrative and racial liberty and international liberty. It was opposed to. the use of force as an instrument of national policy or militarism. It was primarily because capitalism needed peace and international cooperation for the free flow of goods from one country to another and hence, it pleaded for the removal of all political and other barriers which stood in the way of efficient exploitation of world resources.

15.6 CRITICAL EVALUATION

The political philosophy of liberalism has been a subject of criticism at the hands of its advocates as well as its opponents; by the former on account of their polemical interpretations and by the latter, on account of their indictment of the premises of individualism. The curious thing about the philosophy of liberalism is that it has been denounced, rejected, revised and defended by leading writers. For example, Laski who criticized the values of the 'bourgeois class' and yet laid emphasis on the virtues of freedom and tolerance. Likewise, Michael Oakeshott commented that 'a philosophy of crude and uncritical individualism is, in fact, inconsistent with social democracy.' Some important points of criticism of classical liberalism are as follows:

i) An Amorphous Ideology

Both as a doctrine and as a movement, liberalism is an amorphous ideology. Liberalism is commonly used by everyone; who talk in public for every divergent and contradictory purpose. As Bottomore writes, 'one can remain liberal and be *for*, and the other remain liberal and be *against*, a vast range of contradictory political propositions'. The business man and the labour leader, the general and the soldier, the subsidized farmer and the watchmaker all speak in terms of liberalism, defending their interests and making their demands. Similarly, Bullock and Shock write that no student of modem political philosophy would reasonably deny the name of liberal to any of the men represented in this connection, yet each of them, Fox and Bentham, Richard Cobden and Lloyd John Russell. Macaulay and Acton, Herbert Spencer and T.H.Green, Gladstone and Lloyd George, Mill and Keynes held views widely different in some respect from those of others. Arid these differences are differences not only of policies and programmes – those are more easily explained, but also of principle, for example of the role of the state, the vexed question of *laissez faire*. This means that as a public policy, liberalism is without a coherent policy, that its goals have been made so formal and abstract as to provide no clear moral standard, that in its terms genuine conflict of interests, classes, parties and ideals can no longer be stated clearly. Used virtually by all, it lacks political, moral and intellectual clarity. This very'lack of clarity is exploited by all interests. It calls its indecision as open-mindedness, its absence of moral criterion as tolerance, arid formality (or political irrelevance) of criteria as 'broadly speaking'.

ii) Wrong View of Man and Society

The liberal view of man and society has also been criticized. Although the liberal view of human nature has changed in the twentieth century, nevertheless, it considers man as egoistic. lonely, separate from the society, possessive and concerned with the fulfilment of his selfish

interests. Consequently, the society was also seen as an aggregate of individuals, an artificial institution with no organic unity of its own, and the function of politics being the conversion of individual and group conflicts into cooperation, harmony and unity. In other words, society is no more than a jungle where animals roam in the garb of men. The socialist ideology completely rejected this notion of man and society. It argued that man is dependent upon others not only for material needs, but also for cultural and spiritual needs. Socialism viewed man as a social, cooperative being and held the view that the nature of man cannot be studied apart from the society in which be lives. For example, Owen called it unethical, Box termed it unnatural, Marx called it animal like; Mao called it poison, Morris called it hell. Liberalism has no convincing view of the structure ofsociety as a whole other than the now vague notion of it as some kind of a big balance in which all social classes work for the common good. It has no firm sense of history of our times nor of our generation's place within that history.

iii) Philosophy of the Capitalist Class

Notwithstanding the highly flexible character of the principles of liberalism, it cannot be denied that it remained the philosophy of the capitalist class and continues to retain its 'bourgeois' character. Liberalism has been the firm ideology of one class inside one epoch – the urban entrepreneurial middle class which later on became the industrial/capitalist class. It has been the economic philosophy of capitalism and its basic purpose has been the maintenance of socio-political arrangements necessary for capitalist economic relations. Critics point out that its welfare measures have been incidental to its fundamental purpose of protecting and promoting the interests of the capitalist class. According to Laski, liberalism has always seen the poor, as if they became poor because of their own mistakes. Classical liberalism always underplayed the fact that property also brings with it the power to rule over men and things. Although it gives the right to property at a universal level, yet at a practical level, the right is enjoyed only by a minority. The attitude of liberalism towards the poor, trade union activities, education, health, housing, social security is witness to the fact that in the ultimate analysis, all questions are related to profit. The whole economy is geared to the production for profit for the owners of the means of production, however, regulated and controlled the economy may be by the state. As Laski wrote we must, if we are to be honest, admit that liberalism for which Hobhouse battled so bravely has suffered an eclipse as startling and as complete as that which attended the doctrine of the divine right of the kings after the revolution of 1688. The main reason for this was that liberalism became an instrument in the hands of the privileged class to retain its rights.

iv) Negative Concept of State

The criticism commonly passed on this kind of liberalism was that it neglected institutions and their historical growth and that, it worked with a falsely schematic conception of human nature and motives. It had no positive conception of social good and that its egoistic individualism made it look with suspicion on the validity of any such conceptions, at a time when the total welfare of the community was becoming a principal object of concern. Its weakness as a political philosophy was that its theory of government was almost wholly negative at a time when it was becoming inevitable that the government should assume a larger responsibility for general welfare. That early political economy was full of contradictions was well explained by Karl Marx, who turned its arguments to a quite different purpose. Ricardo had emphasized that the interests of the landlord were antagonistic to that of both labour and capital. Karl Marx said that it was equally true that the interests of the capitalists

were antagonistic to that of the working class because whatever share of the product went to profit was drawn from the wages of the workers. If the landlord could extract rent because lie monopolized land, the capitalist in an industrialized economy monopolized the means of production and his profits are a kind of surplus value or the economic ren'. In fact, negative liberalism provided Marx with a ready picture of the exploitation of labour. Liberal economists thought that the system they were describing was natural, whereas Marx explained that it was rooted in history and ascribed the exploitation to the capitalist system. Similarly, Laski also said later on: 'the purpose of capitalism was to free the owners of the means of production from all those constraints which hampered the complete economic exploitation'. Its concepts of human nature, society, social harmony economy and state began to be challenged by the mid-nineteenth century, as a result of which it changed to welfare liberalism.

To criticize liberalism is not to belittle its historical importance and contribution. During the past 400 years, liberalism has given many humanistic and democratic ideas and almost all the issues of modern western philosophy have been connected with liberalism in one way or the other. It has been the mainstream of western socio-economic and political philosophy. Liberalism has given progressive slogans like liberty, equality, fraternity, natural and inalienable rights of man, democracy, development of human personality etc and it has vigorously fought against the orthodoxies represented by monarchy, papacy and the feudal socio-economic order. In the beginning, as the philosophy of the revolutionary bourgeoisie class, liberalism guided many revolutionary struggles, against the feudal order. Its economic philosophy played an important role in the industrial development of the west, its social philosophy helped in the establishment of an open market society, its political philosophy paved the way for liberal democracy, its ethical philosophy led to the triumph of individualism, and its promoted secularism in all walks of social life. Classical liberalism freed the individual frorn traditional authorities and the state, and maintained that political power is the trust of the people. However, during tlie later half of the 19th century, a number of contradictions began to emerge in the face of marxist challenge and gradually, classical liberalism was replaced by welfare (or positive) liberalism. But we continue to need liberalism, though it may not be enough. The drift towards authoritarianism and the decay in civil liberties, the increase in police powers and the curtailment of rights are developments underlying the fragility of liberal achievements even in its traditional heartlands and make a firm commitment to the best of liberal values and institutions all tlie more necessary.

15.7 SUMMARY

Liberalism is the dominant ideology of the present-day western world. It was the product of the climate of opinion that merged in the context of renaissance, reformation and industrial revolution in England and Europe. Classical liberalism has been enriched by a host ofthinkers, prominent among whom are Thomas Hobbes, John Locke, Adam Smith, Malthus, Richardo, Bentham, James Mill, Herbert Spencer, William Senior and Thomas Paine.

Classical liberalism had faith in the absolute value and worth and spiritual equality of the individual.

It believed in the masterless individual, in the autonomy of the individual will and the rationality and goodness of the individual..

The individual must have freedom in all spheres: political, social, cultural, economic, moral intellectual, spiritual etc. Freedom meant absence of restraints or freedom from all such authorities which could act arbitrarily or capriciously,

It believed in the inalienable rights of the individual. It cherished the rights of life, liberty and property as natural rights, riot at the mercy of either state or society

It supported free economy, free trade, contract, exchange and competition. It opposed state interference in the economy,

It considered the state as an artificial institution. It is the creation of man and is based upon social contract. The relationship between the state and the individual is contractual and if the state violates the contract, revolution against the state (government) is the duty of the individual,

The state, in spite of being the creation of man, is, necessarily an evil; its role is purely negative i.e. to maintain law and order, protect the rights of the individual and leave the individual free 'to pursue his own good in his own way'.

15.8 EXERCISES

1) Explain the concept and characteristics of liberalism.

2) Discuss the rise of liberalism.

3) Critically examine free market liberalism.

4) Discuss classical liberalism.

UNIT 16 WELFARE STATE

Structure .

16.1 Introduction
16.2 Evolution of Positive Liberalism
16.3 Liberal Democratic Welfare State
16.3.1 Welfare State is a Positive State
16.3.2 Welfare State is Democratic
16.3.3 Welfare State Relieves in a Mixed Economy
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16.4 Justification of the Welfare State
16.4.1 State and the Market
16.4.2 Individualist
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16.5 Welfare State: Contemporary Debate
16.6 Crisis in the Welfare State : An Assessment
16.7 Summary
16.8 Exercises

16.1 INTRODUCTION

The term 'welfare state' describes collectively a range of social policies that aim to provide basic services such as health and education, according to the need and normally, free of charge through state Cunding. It is sometimes extended more loosely to areas such as social security in which individuals are legally required to make substantial contributions in order to receive the benefits. The theory of welfare state is the basis ofpositive liberalistn. It is a sort of state, which provides extensive social services to all the citizens, protects the weaker sections, provides economic and social security and tries to reduce the gap between the rich and the poor. It makes laws to control the economy, nationalizes industries, makes laws to protect the weaker sections, arranges the supply of essential commodities, maintains essential services and through progressive taxation and income redistribution, tries to reduce the gap between the rich and the poor and thereby, harmonizes the different interests in society.

The existence of some form of welfare is now accepted across most of the political spectrum. However, of late, the concept of welfare state has been radically challenged by the libertarians for whom it represents a violation of the rights of those who are taxed to provide its funding. The major point of debate is, whether it should be regarded as a safety net establishing a minimum level of welfare beneath which no one is allowed to fall or as an agency of

redistribution from the rich to the poor fostering greater social equality. Others have also questioned the strength of the welfare state; i.e. does it ensure the citizens the necessary income to fight insecurities and enable them to lead a stable. dignified civilized life? Does it remove inequalities of real income? Does the welfare state usher a trend where private sector be curbed, crippled and made powerless? Has the welfare state been able to free the economy from booms, depressions, inflation and other economic crises? The contemporary crisis in the welfare state has given a boost to classical liberalism in the new garb of libertarianism. We shall try to answer these questions in this unit

16.2 EVOLUTION OF POSITIVE LIBERALISM

The latter half of the nineteenth century produced a critique of negative liberalism. The theories of non- interference were found to be inadequate to achieve the social and economic aims of liberalism. The *laissez faire* policy was based on the premise that in the good of the individual, lies the good of the society. Negative liberalism believed that the distribution of wealth into wage, profit and rent was not unjustified. However, the latter half of the nineteenth century saw the rapid concentration of capital in a few hands, monopolistic control of trade, and emergence of big industrial houses which created many social, economic and political contradictions. It created a sense of frustration and protest among millions whose livelihood and very life depended upon their new masters – the impersonal corporations. Another factor which undermined faith in the *laissez faire* was unemployment. When millions remained outside the work force for years, men began to doubt whether the free trade economy, if left to its own laws and harmonies, actually produced the maximum general good. In fact, the liberal slogan of liberty began to change into the privilege of the few. In England, the report of the Royal Commission appointed to investigate the coal mining industry shocked everyone about the brutality that existed in the mines, the employment of women and children, barbarously long hours of work, the absence of safety devices and the prevalence of revolting conditions, both physical and moral. Classical liberalism became a target of attack from all sides. The humanists criticized it due to its practical consequences such as poverty, inhuman conditions, unbearable exploitation, illiteracy and misery for the majority of the population. Writers like Carlyle, Ruskin, Dickens attacked the capitalist order on moral and aesthetic grounds. The utopian socialists like Robert Owen criticized the capitalist order and the injustice inherent, but appealed to the conscience of the capitalists to take care of the working class. Karl Marx challenged the capitalist system as such and declared that the salvation of the working class lay in overthrowing the capitalist order through revolutionary means and the establishment of a socialist state. In short, liberalism desperately needed revision.

A thoroughgoing revision of liberal theory required a re- examination of the nature and functions of the state, the nature of liberty and the relationship between Liberty and authority. Such a re-examination also opened the question of the relationship between individual human nature and itsrelations with society because the old notions such as self-interest, pleasure and utility proved less convincing. 'This revision is known as 'Positive Liberalism' and was carried out by J.S. Mill, T.H. Green. D.G. Ritchie in the nineteenth century and Hobson, Hobhouse, Lindsay, G.D.H. Cole, Barker, Laski, Keynes, MacIver and Galbraith in the twentieth century.

J.S. Mill's ideas of liberalism depart from those of the classical model in four ways. Firstly, he opined that the value of the personality of the individual can be realized in the actual conditions of a free society. Secondly, he accepted political and social freedom as good in

themselves. To live one's own life, developing one's own native traits and capacities is not only a means to happiness, but a substantive part of happiness itself. A good society is one which permits both freedom and opens up the opportunity for a free and satisfying way of life. Third, liberty is not an individual good, but a social good. And fourth, the function of a liberal state in a free society is not to leave the individual alone, but also to act as a means of creating increasing and equalizing opportunity.

T.H. Green brought about an idealist revision of liberalism. He made it abundantly clear that liberalism could not be placed on narrow foundations. He inferred that at the centre of liberal philosophy was the idea of the general good or common human well-being which is capable of being shared by everyone and which provided a standard for legislation. This standard could not be individual liberty alone. Choice means opportunity and opportunity means a society that is not coercive beyond need, either in its legal and political structure or in its economic and social structure.

Freedom is really as much social as it is an individual conception; it refers at once to the quality of society and the quality of persons that make up that society. Green defined liberty as 'a positive power or capacity of doing or enjoying something worth doing or enjoying'. Freedom implies not only a legal but an actual possibility. Hence, it is impossible that a government should be liberal merely by standing aside and refraining frotn legislation or that a liberal society should come into being merely by political inadvertence. The function of a liberal government is to support the existence of a free society and it can remove many of the obstacles that may stand in the way of moral development such as ignorance, lack of education, poverty, illiteracy and unhealthy sanitary conditions.

Green did not claim that legislation could in itself promote moral goodness; nevertheless in many situations, legislative intervention alone could bring into existence conditions in which men could exercise freely their faculties of moral judgement, enlarging the area of 'positive freedom'. Similarly, Bosanquet in his book *The Philosophical Theory of State* rcjectcd the negative concept of liberty and contended that the fundamental concept of a genuine and social philosophy must be based upon an idea that the assertion and maximization of self and individuality becomes possible and real in and through society. The end of the slate lies in ensuring conditions for good life; these conditions are rights arising out of man's moral being which the state seeks to promote. It is the higher sense of liberty since it presents 'the greater area to activity and the more extensive choice to self –determination... '

At the beginning of the twentieth century, liberalism was concerned with several allied problems in the context of developing capitalism; namely, to seek a theoretical justification for continued state action for the promotion of social welfare, to integrate socialism into the frame of liberalism. This was achieved by writers like Laslci, Keynes, Barker etc. For example, Laslci wrote, 'liberty is the power of adding something to common life, a contribution which can only be made if i) there are certain specific conditions that enable the individual to make the contribution, and ii) that institutional obstacles are not in his way'' The state as an agency of the community and not of any one section of it, has through the guarantee of rights, ensured the former and through regulating legislation, removed the latter. However, during the interwar years, when the organic theory'of state was abused by the fascist leaders, the neo-liberals were quick to explain the just limits of the state–the promotion of the welfare of the individual. The state was seen at best as adjustor, and a coordinator and the authority exercised by it as morally valid only if it seeks to promote liberty, For this, the liberals maintained, the

organization of authority must be democratic, the only form of polity consistent with the view of liberty. The democratic polity is to secure fundamental liberties of individuals, to secure a wider area of autonomy for the vast number of voluntary associations through which the citizens realise their several ends and to secure institutional checks against a possible abuse of power.

During 1929-33, the liberal capitalist state had to face a worldwide economic depression as a result of which the capitalist economy was completely shattered. To cope with the problem of hunger and mass unemployment, liberalism was compelled to re-evaluate its capitalist foundations. To resolve the incompatibility of 'free society and a relatively stable capitalist economy', J.M. Keynes working within the capitalist tradition went further than any other liberal writer. His conclusion was that there is an inherent imbalance within the capitalist economy. As capitalism matures, this imbalance increases and the concentration of capital reaches a limit where profitable investment becomes impossible. This leads to economic crises leading to mass uneinployment. To control trade cycles, Keynes argued for the direct interference of the state so that capital investment could be made, which would, in turn, fill the gap between production and consumption, keep the industry working and will eliminate large scale unemployment. To save liberalism and capitalism, Keynes felt that 'the state should have control over the capitalist economy and the rates of savings, Investments, profit, taxation rate and wages were the state subjects. He did not agree with the anti-thesis between capitalism and socialism and thereby, also.rejected the anti-thesis between the individual and the state. This marked not the end, but the enlargement of the fundamental liberal conception of liberty.

After the Second World War, how the problems arising out of the war made the interference of the state all the more necessary was reflected the works of John Galbriath. In his books The *Affluent* **Society** and *The New Industrial State*, he argued for getting rid of conventional wisdom i.e. classical liberalism and adopt socialist methods, devoid of ideology. He suggested certain socialist measures for the welfare of capitalist societies and warned the developed countries that if they wanted to get rid of the recurring economic crises, then the interference of the state in the economic field will have to be welcomed.

In short, positive liberalism as it evolved during the later half of the 19th and the first half of the 20th centuries could be distinguished from classical negative liberalism in many' ways. ***Firstly,*** although it continued to retain faith in the autonomy, rights and liberty of the individual, now it believed that man is a part of the social whole and the liberties could be secured only so long as they could be reconciled with the social good. Society was considered 'a potential harmonious and ordered structure in which all social classes work for the common good'. Society has its own interest, it'has ethical and moral dimensions and the individual good cannot be achieved without social good. Secondly, liberty, like justice and equality, is not an empty social ideal, but deri vas its specific content from a particular social and historical milieu in which it has to be understood. Liberty in the society implied adjustment of mutual claims that are made possible through a system or rights which are both restraints and liberties. 'Liberty was not merely the absence of restraints, but conditions necessary for free and full development of the self which a state, true to its own moral purpose must ensure'. 'Liberty through compulsion" though a paradox was justified as practically valid. Only on this ground it justified social and welfare legislation, Also, liberty implied equality. Equality provided the basis through which liberty comes to acquire a positive meaning. Liberty and equality are complementary. Equality is not only equality before law or mere equality of opportunity or of being treated as a human being, but also economic equality commensurable with political

liberty – a modification through state action of the excessive disparities of wealth and of opportunity that follow. *Thirdly*, positive liberalism believed in regulated capitalist economy, in the overall interest of society. The state could check the individual capitalist, through economic and social reforms, the conditions of the working class could be improved; poverty, illiteracy, unemployment and exploitation could be checked. The gap between the rich and the poor could be bridged through the positive action of the state. ***Fourthly,*** at the political level, positive liberalism depended upon the proposition that the sense of public good or general welfare is an effective motive of politics. The state is an instrument for the development of human personality through welfare measures. The state has **a** positive character and is capable of performing socially useful functions. The institutional arrangements for achieving the good of the individual and the society are democracy, representative government, constitutionalism, parliamentary methods, universal franchise, party organization. The liberal government is one which protects the rights of the individual as well as of the community. The state is to coordinate different interests and classes in society. It does not belong to a particular class, but to the society as a whole.

16.3 LIBERAL DEMOCRATIC WELFARE STATE

Positive liberalism in the twentieth century came to be identified with the democratic welfare state. The welfare state involves a radical transformation of the nineteenth century capitalist *laissez faire* state in respect of the scope of public policy, the character of state action, the basic assumptions concerning human nature and the idea of social good. The welfare state attempted to reconcile the interests of the individual with that of the society in order the essentials of the capitalist system were preserved while at the same time removing its illeffects. The object of the state is not only to maintain law, order and justice, but it is also a part of the social process, its function in the society is to serve the common interests and perform services for the welfare of all members of the society. The main principles of the welfare state are relatively simple. Firstly, the recognition that every member of the community, solely because he is a human being, is entitled to a minimum standard of living. *Secondly*, the welfare state is committed to a policy of economic stability and progress, seeking to eliminate the cycles of violent booms and busts in the economy by public policies, whenever private enterprise is unable to prevent by itself the threat of economic instability or decline. ***Thirdly,*** the welfare state is committed to full employment as one of the top priorities of public policy. The economic depression of the 1930s showed not only the economic ravages of unemployment, but also the human degradation inflicted upon those who though able and anxious to work, could not find jobs for reasons over which they had no control. Adherents of the welfare state believe that free enterprise can be preserved and strengthened by full employment policies without going to the extremes of nationalization. Taxation properly adjusted to periods of prosperity and depression, interest rates determined by governmental decisions, according to current and prospective economic needs and conditions, fiscal policies designed to redistribute purchasing power in harmony with the best interests of the nation, investment incentives to private business in times of slack public works for direct unemployment relief, government credits to builders or buyers of homes–thcse are'but a few of the measures the government can adopt in stabilizing the economy without changing its foundations.

In the field of social security, protection against want, sickness and old age is not only demanded by humanitarian considerations, but can also be justified on economic grounds since a minimum standard of living guaranteed by social security provides people with a minimum purchasing power which is indispensable to the operation of industry in prosperity and depression.

Collective bargaining between labour and management is another basic contribution towards a more stable and prosperous economy because higher wages – provided they are based on higher productivity and not on organized extortion – create a bigger market for the products of industry and agriculture.

Through the instrument of welfare, positive liberalism used the power of the state to modify the play of market forces in at least three directions: i) by guaranteeing individuals and families a minimum income irrespective of the marltet value of their work or property, ii) by narrowing the content of insecurity by enabling individuals and families to meet certain social contingencies such as sickness, old age and unemployment, and iii) by ensuring that all citizens without distinction of status or class are offered the best available agreed range of social services. The distinguishing characteristic of the welfare state is the assumption by the community, acting through the state, of the responsibility of providing the means whereby all its members can reach minimum standard of health, economy and civilized living and can share, according to tlieir capacity, in its social and cultural heritage. The welfare state has the following unique features.

16.3.1 Welfare State is a Positive State

The underlying assumption behind the welfare state is that the state is not a necessary evil, but a desirable institution capable of promoting positive good. Whereas the *laissez faire* liberalism contended that the government can advance the common interest by leaving the individual alone and through the free and unrestricted play of natural forces, the exponents of welfare state argued that 'the state could best promote the general welfare by a positive exercise of its powers'. It regarded the democratic state not as an evil force but as an instrument that the people could and should use to further their common interest, to ameliorate the conditions under which they lived and worked, and to provide for their health and safety, and to some extent, for their social and economic security.

16.3.2 Welfare State is Democratic

The neo-liberals categorically asserted that the welfare state is a democratic state, possessing a certain formal institutional mechanism which is considered essential in liberal democratic society. Any state which may be a welfare state, but is not democratic from the institutional point of view, cannot be regarded a liberal state. The state can be a welfare state only, if it manifests itself through a formal democratic institutional attire. A state which merely undertakes the task of welfare such as guaranteeing a minimum income, elimination of insecurity of tlie individual and the family crises by supplying 'social contingencies' and whicli also tries to provide a certain range of services to all, but does not provide a democratic institutional framework and political arid civil liberties, will not be considered a welfare state. It is on this ground that communist countries like the former Soviet Union, China and erstwhile East European countries as well as fascist states like Germany were excluded from the category of the welfare state. In other words, the term welfare state is used only for the states of those capitalist countries which undertake the positive task of providing welfare services and where the government preserves the formal democratic institutional framework.

16.3.3 Welfare State believes in a Mixed Economy

A welfare state operates within the framework of the marltet economy i.e. the capitalist mode of production. However, unlike the *laissez faire* capitalist economy, the welfare state believes

that unrestricted operation of the market has proved dangerous for the individual (because it led to poverty, ignorance, illiteracy etc) as well as for the economy (because it led to booms, depressions, crises lending to waste and inefficiency). The welfare state does not want to eliminate the market- based economy, but to streamline it in a manner where it could realize tlie productive potentialities by preventing crises. The welfare state believes that poverty, dependencies and economic insecurity are not the consequences of nature and incompetence on the part of the poor, but result from changeable institutions of society. For the first time in history, modern technology has made it possible to banish poverty from the face of earth. The economic and other insecurities are caused by social forces and could be avoided by purposeful social action. Economic insecurity stems from - a) inadequate compensation, b) disabilities incurred through accident, ill health, old age etc, and c) unemployment. The welfare state believes that these insecurities can be overcome by remodelling tlie *laissez faire* economy and by introducing a form of planning to realize these objectives. But planning should be combined with the market economy in various degrees. In other words, it would rectify the evils of tlie capitalist system by state intervention. It stands for what is now popularly known as 'mixed econoniy' or a 'managed economy'.

16.3.4 Welfare State is a Permanent Institution of Society and a Neutral Agency

The welfare state, positive liberalism maintains, is an eternal and permanent institution of society. The state is also a neutral instrument of power which can be used for any purpose. The state is an arbiter seeking the good of any society impartially. The ability of the state to provide quantity, quality and the type of welfare depends upon the groups who wield the state power. The personnel of the government could be changed by the will of the people through universal suffrage. The state does not belong to a particular class. It tries to intervene in the economy positively and reshape it in such a manner that a minimum of social living is created for all the citizens irrespective of the status and class position oF citizens in the society. As Titmus pointed out, 'it was increasingly regarded as a proper function of government to ward of distress and strain among not only the poor, but almost all classes of society'.

In short, positive liberalism considered tlie welfare state as a new kind of state which is democratic in form; which though considering 'profit oriented market economy' as desirable, seeks to regulate or streamline it to serve social needs and thereby, provide social welfare to the citizens. It is a state which has evolved from the *laissez faire* state by a process of increased interference in the operation of the market economy at various levels and by gradually regulating the power of capital. It is a state in which political power is increasingly' used to free the people from tlie tyranny of capital assuring them a certain standard of welfare. The welfare amenities are not restricted to a specific group, but belong to the society as a whole.

16.4 JUSTIFICATION OF THE WELFARE STATE

The emergence of tlie case for the welfare state began with the argument that instead of public welfare being the cause of dependence, loss of autonomy and capacity For individual responsibility for action and the market as the source of independence and freedom, the opposite is tlie case. The advocates of tlie welfare state argued that the individual has no control over his dostiny in tlie context of impersonal market forces; the market system is unpredictable for some groups. That is, if people cannot be held responsible for their plight, the foundations for

welfare had to be quite different from those associated with classical liberalism. Historically, a major factor in the development of the welfare state was the growing mass unemployment during the interwar period in the western world and the assumption that only the government could alleviate it. It was acceptance of the theory that distribution was not simply the distribution of income, but 'redistribution ' of resources according to ethical criteria such as need, desert and so on and even equally, for its own sake. Social welfare was associated with social justice. For example, in Britain, the Beveridge Report in 1942 identified hive major categories of sufferings: *want, disease, ignorance, squalor and idleness.* This established the foundation of the welfare state. Taken with the Keynesian macro- economic policies, the idea of welfare had become completely associated with a social philosophy designed not to replace the market, but to correct it.

The birth of the modern theory of welfare depended on the reinterpretation of certain key political concepts; notably liberty, equality and justice. Their net effect was to transform the nature of society from a conception of loosely associated individuals into a more intimate form of community. It was argued that if people could be held together by social bonds that transcended contractual relationships, then they could make claims on each other as citizens of a common enterprise which could exceed their contribution as measured in more calculative economic terms. State welfare was regarded not as an act of charity, but a form of entitlement. Simultaneously, the idea of welfare also developed outside the economic sphere. It concentrated on the need itself, regardless of its cause of a particular consequence that may flow from attempts to relieve it. If to this is added the demand for minimum income and redistribution in the name of social justice, we get the ideal of a citizenship. This is not defined by civil and political liberties alone, but also include claims to economic resources, not as market determined rewards for work, but as a consequence of the membership of the community.

Inspite of the fact that the idea of the welfare state became a consensus view in the post-war period, there was no agreement within liberalism about the theoretical justification for the welfare state. Different scholars gave different justifications for the welfare state: such as to correct the ill-effects of free trade capitalism, to enhance the liberty of the individual, to bring about an equalitarian society, to establish justice (which of course included social justice), to implement the citizenship rights etc. Apart from these, there were also moral and altruistic justifications. Let us have a Grief look at some of them.

16.4.1 State and the Market

In the literature an social welfare, a dichotomy between the *state and the market* is shown. The main criticism against free trade capitalism was that it leads to monopoly capitalism and an economy dominated by the power of trusts, combines, cartels, multinationals and trans-national corporations. This in turn gives rise to a variety of social, economic and political contradictions in society. In the absence of any positive interference by the state in the political economy, the exploitation of the working class by an aristocracy of monopoly capitalism without caring for any social responsibility, unemployment on a large scale, inhuman working conditions in factories, competitive low wages, Iong working hours, poverty, illiteracy and poor health are bound to result. Also, free trade capitalist economy is the enemy of socio-economic equality. As was pointed out by Green and Tawney, by denying redistribution of national wealth through the state, the market fosters inequality and injustice. It was argued that the old mechanism of the market, because they were powered by self-interest, cannot be sensitive to the welfare needs precisely because they cannot be translated into prices and also

those in need lack the resources to pay the price set by the market. As Titmus said, 'capitalism is a biological failure; it is promoting the extinction of the society'. Though he did not reject the market, he maintained that it is the cause of those economic misfortunes that render some people in need of welfare. Since market relations are competitive, they must also be divisive. Society's welfare is not reducible to the individual's experiences ofwellbeing to which he is entitled to by his own efforts, but consists of a complex amalgam of rational and communal sentiments. It can be said that the individuals by living in society, in fact, receive 'economic rent' i.e., the difference between the income they would receive outside society and that which they actually get because of their existence of social co-operation which they do not directly create. Thus, welfare is a form of compensation drawn from collective resources. And this task can be performed by the state. The state can ameliorate the conditions under which people live and work by providing for their health and safety and for their social and economy security. The state can reshape the economy in such a manner that a minimum level of social living is created for all citizens irrespective of their status and class position in society.

16.4.2 Individualist

A sophisticated moral justification for the welfare state was based on ***individualist*** grounds. It believes that the market forces do cause distress and hence, undermine the notion of individual autonomy. This is inconsistent with the liberal belief in the equal autonomy of each individual and hence, to restrain from aiding a person in deprivation where such action is not excessively costly is morally harming that person. In other words, welfare is not an act of morality but a compelling duty. This is embedded in the autonomy of the individual. A person who is formally free in the sense of nor being coerced is not virtually free, if their choices do not emanate from their autonomous will. According to Albert Weale, certain material conditions 'must necessarily hold for individual to carry out a wide range of projects'. It is not that people make wrong choices but that in the absence of welfare, some peoples' choices are arbitrarily narrowed. If liberalism requires the conditions of equal autonomy for individuals and markets fail to provide, then government action is required to sustain the liberal social order. Similarly, Raymond Plant argues that 'basic needs have to be satisfied to do anything at **all'.** What makes needs objective is that they are a necessary means to the achievement of moral autonomy. Again, whereas wants cannot form the basis of a strict claim on others, needs can. This is because what makes need satisfaction of overriding importance is that the failure to provide for it is morally equivalent to harming someone.

16.4.3 Enhances Individual Liberty

An important justification for the welfare state was that it *enhances individual* liberty. In fact, the welfare state was the natural corollary of the reinterpretation of liberty from being something negative to something positive. Its intellectual roots are found in T.H. Green and continued through Bosanquet, Richie, Hobhouse, Laski etc. In his famous essay 'Liberal Legislation and Freedom of Contract', Green defined liberty as 'freedom as something to be so highly prized, we mean a pqsifive power or capacity of doing something worth doing or enjoying and that too, something that we do or enjoy in common with others.' The function of the liberal state should be to support the existence of free society, He reached the conclusion that the function of the state can be nothing else, but of maintaining the conditions of life in which morality is possible. The state is to help man in realizing the ideal of self-realization as a member of society by removing external hindrances. Its main function is to create the external

conditions in which there will be the fewest possible impediments in the way of every man doing his best to himself. Stated in these terms, the state was made a welfare state; this is nothing less than liberating the human capacity for self-determination. Jf illiteracy, ignorance, poverty, drinking, insanitation are removed, the liberty of the individual is enhanced. On these grounds, Green advocated state intervention to enforce compulsory education, prohibition, state control over health and housing as necessary for the full development of the individual personality in and through the society. By insisting that it is the function of the state to remove all obstacles to good life arad to provide conditions in which freedom could be pursued, Green laid the foundations of the twentieth century welfare state. The first world war, socialist revolution in Russia, rise of Fascism and the world economic depression in the first half of the 20th century created a favourable environment for the welfare state which was reflected in the writings of Laski, Keynes, Roosevelt, Galbraith etc. For example, Laski talked of liberty as 'the power of adding something to common life, a contribution which can be made if (a) there are certain specific conditions that, enable the individual to make the contribution, and (b) that institutions are not in his way. The former can be guaranteed by the state through the provision of rights and the latter, through regulative legislation. In other words, the state was considered a source and condition of liberty. As he wrote, 'the state, in brier, is at best an adjuster, a coordinator and the authority it exercises is morally valid only if it seeks to promote liberty'. In particular, it meant reinterpreting the term economic liberty which was considered as 'security and 'the opportunity to find reasonable significance in the earning of one's daily bread'. It meant freedom from the constant fear of unemployment and insufficiency which sap the whole strength of an individual's personality.

16.4.4 Equality

Along with liberty, the social philosophy of welfare has been concerned with *equality* itself, not the justification in rational terms of socially and economically necessary inequalities or the identification and elimination of objective needs, but egalitarianism for its own sake. What R.H. Tawney called 'the religion of inequality' has been a constant source of criticism from welfare philosophers. However, the liberal welfare philosophy has never advocated an uncompromising egalitarianism, but a system in which those legal and political equalities that classical liberalism had always valued are reflected in the economic world to a far greater extent than is possible in the capitalist market system. Equality has a potent value in welfarism. It is argued that the virtues of exchange relationship are badly compromised, if the participants in them are separated by gross disparities of wealth. Since in the capitalist societies, some entrants to the market will start with an advantage for which perhaps no rational justification can be given, this inequality will be reflected in the outcome and the results itself. The market instead of being an arena of expanding opportunities will become a source of inequalities. There is a persistent question: why should the value of equality have the significance it traditionally had in the philosophy of welfare? This is because all societies seem to exhibit pretty regular inegalitarian features which seem more or less impervious to significant correction by political methods. Modern legal and political inequalities are not accompanied by economic equality. Wealth can buy political power in defiance of merely formal equal rules of the liberal system. Inspite of the disappointing results of equalitarianism, the welfare theorists feel that there is still a moral obligation to promote welfare through egalitarian measures where this would not have such an adverse effect on the output of the economy that the worst off would suffer. Not to take action in such circumstances would be to accept the level of economic inequality, which itself has adverse or welfare reducing effect on the rest of the society.

16.4.5 Rights

Some theorists have justified the welfare state in tlic *context* of **'rights'.** According to H.L.A. Hart, rights imply a special congruity in the use of force or threat of force to secure that what is just or fair or someone's right to have done shall in fact be done. It is only in these circumstances that coercion of another human being is legitimate. If there are any welfare rights, then it can only be so if coercion can be justified in the redistribution of resources than their possession necessitates. Welfare is not justified in terms of benevolence, but is a feature of entitlenient or justice. However. this could have two implications for the welfare theory: i) welfare rights would be symmetrical with the familiar negative rights (i.e., right to forbearance from aggressive action on tlie part of others), and ii) it would provide that the very existence of welfare rights enforceable as law encourages people to adjust their behaviour accordingly, i.e. become welfare rights' claimants. However, the critics claimed that there is no exact symmetry between the negative and positive rights, since the latter are indeterminate as well as not fully justifiable.

16.4.6 Citizenship

Because of the objections raised against the rights theory, welfare state now grafts on the notion of rights as a *theory of citizenship.* This has the advantage of limiting the applicability ofwelfare claims to particular communities and the theoretical one of establishing the identity of persons not by their capacity to choose, but by their membership of the collective community. Citizenship as a foundation for welfare is a little less ambitious. It simply maintains that claims to resources are an extension from the legal and political rights that have emerged in the development of liberal democracy. T.H. Marshall specifically placed the economic aspect ofcitizensliip in an evolutionary account of the development of liberal democracy. Talking in tlie context of British society, Marshall identified three categories of citizenship rights: i) legal – which embraced the traditional rights to free expression, property, equality before law and the familiar civil liberties; ii) political -- which covcrcd the political rights in a democracy, and iii) social – the welfare rights which give a person certain entitlement to resources. Social citizenship was an attempt to reform capitalism through legislation. The gradual development of universal provisions for basic education, health and social security were attempts to change the nature of cash nexus between the capital and labour. Legislation on minimum wages, hours of work, employment of children, working conditions, occupational safety and compensation of occupational accidents made the employees less vulnerable to the capitalist class. The state through positive intervention and by reformulating its taxation and expenditure policies is able to resolve the conflicts between the two. Though the creation of social citizenship did not remove class inequalities, nor was it able to fundamentally transform the economic basis of capitalism, still through the welfare state it was able to reduce certain social inequalities, especially those associated with the operation of the market. 'The rational for citizenship lies in its capacity for the integration of all individuals into a society; for instance the prcscnce of economic rights that pertain to citizenship prevent class conflict getting out of hand'. Citizenship 'imposed modifications on the class.' Though Marshall was not opposed to the market, he did see an unrestrained capitalism as socially destructive. Other citizenship theorists also believe that the three types of citizenships are inter-related. For example, the right to free speech and legal equality require some measure of welfare if they arc to be more than a formal guarantee. Indeed, liberal pluralism is itself only possible when some measure of economic welfare is guaranteed.

16.4.7 Justice

Apart from the above justifications, in contemporary political theory, *justice* has become almost inextricably bound up with welfare. John Rawls in his book *A Theory of Justice* insists that justice is the first virtue of a society and that it should always take priority over other goods which may be interpreted in the welfare sense. Yet his concept of justice is a welfarist concept, one specifically concerned with the legitimisation of a distribution of resources and with levels of wellbeing. Indeed, despite its individualistic methodology, it is a normative theory that posits welfare functions for society differing in substance but not in principle, from other welfare functions such as utilitarian ones. His justice is nearer to the liberal political economy. While his first principle of justice is concerned with equal rights to the most extensive basic liberties compatible with similar liberties of others, the second principle is concerned with the arrangements of social and economic inequalities in such a way that they are to the greatest benefit of the least advantaged. The purpose of legislation is largely concerned with the achievement of long term social and economic goals as well as to fulfil the principle that requires that 'social and economic policies be aimed at maximising the long term expectations of the least advantaged under conditions of fair equality and opportunity'. At social and economic level, Rawls is in favour of redistributive justice. He considers the proper function of government as not only to maintain social order, but the achievement of distributive justice by placing the highest social value on the need of the neediest. However, he does not believe in complete egalitarian distribution. He advocates privileges and inequalities – not in the utilitarian sense of maximization of social good – but to improve the plight of the least advantaged. This is because according to Rawls, natural abilities and circumstances of birth foster privileges and inequalities and since such inequalities cannot be eliminated, a just society will seek to compensate for the resulting privileges by investing its resources including the abilities of the most talented in efforts assigned to improve the plight of the least fortunates. To reward those endowed with superior ability would be arbitrary justice. Justice properly understood calls not for rewarding those with superior ability, but for compensating those endowed with lesser ability. In short, rising above the *laissez faire* view of classical liberalism which leaves the individual alone, Rawls propounded a theory of justice in consonance with the requirements of liberal democratic welfare state. As he writes, 'if law and government act effectively to keep the market competitive, resources fully employed, properly and wealth widely distributed over time and to maintain the appropriate social minimum, then if there is equality of opportunity underwritten by education for all, the resulting distribution will be just'. In the context of welfare, Rawls is a muted egalitarian who extends the ethics of redistribution beyond the ownership of tangible property to the income derived from personal talent. Superficially, at least, this seems to put the welfare imperative above the individualistic demand of justice.

16.5 WELFARE STATE: CONTEMPORARY DEBATE

The welfare state seems a compromise between the market model of classical liberalism and contemporary libertarianism. It combines the capitalist freedoms and inequalities with socialist equalities. It wants to achieve the best practical realization of the demands of liberty, equality and justice. It retains the essentials of the capitalist system while removing its attendant abuses. However, inspite of great claims, the concept of welfare state has raised many questions. The contemporary debate in western societies has almost been about the welfare state and the: crisis in the welfare philosophy, particularly, after the slow down in the economic growth in

the 1970s. The theory of welfare state believed that the mixed economy would generate a level of national income sufficient to finance the welfare services and was justified on ethical grounds; that the primary aim of the welfare philosophers was redistributive i.e. the common provision for education, health, unemployment insurance etc which would bring equality and relief from deprivation, and that the welfare state would generate a form of citizenship that would soften the acquisitive and non-altruistic attitude which was prevalent in the market society. But the questions are: does it ensure the citizens the necessary income to fight insecurities and enable them to ensure a stable, dignified and civilized life? Does it remove the inequalities of real income by adopting measures to redistribute income between the rich and the poor and by preventing the concentration of wealth in a few hands? Does the mixed economy usher a trend whereby private sector is curbed, crippled and made powerless? Has the welfare state been able to free the economy from booms, depressions, inflation and other economic crises? Does the state supply the services efficiently? The answer to all these questions is far from satisfactory.

According to Barry, the assimilation of the welfare theory with the philosophy of the welfare state was an intellectual error. The theoretical mistake was the construction of a social philosophy that virtually ignored those welfare enhancing properties of the market system that had been stressed by earlier liberal political economists. As a result, there has been an inexorable expansion of the welfare state with the result that the welfare state has mutated from a system designed to protect the vulnerable from the random effects of market forces to a comprehensive set of social arrangements which had only a contingent connection with the original purpose of interventionism. This was because the welfare theorists did not take proper account of the institutions that are required for the delivery of the welfare goods. There can be no guarantee, for example, that the outcome of a competitive party process in a democracy will coincide with the moral imperatives of state welfare. There was a serious problem as to whether majority rule procedures are efficient translation into positive policies of whatever altruistic sentiments exist in a community.

Throughout the twentieth century, there was a sort of consensus about the necessity for some sort of state welfare because of the realization that there are certain genuine collective welfare ends which could not be met through voluntary action. What is important about the contemporary attack on the welfare state is that because welfare involves coercion, it reduces freedom. The libertarian philosophers like Nozick do not approve of the idea of the welfare state. They defend the market economy and hold that the distributive policies of the state in the name of welfare, violate peoples' rights. They do not agree with Rawls that talents and skills of the individuals are the common assets of society and the individuals are entitled to the fruits of their talents so long as they improve the conditions of the least advantaged section of society. It is nothing short of seizing one's labour and a fundamental attack on the sovereignty of the individual. Again, too much role to the state can lead to increasing bureaucracy, increasing decline of freedom and may result in inefficiency. It represents a violation of the rights of those who are taxed to provide funding for the poor. According to Barry, although the terms in which Nozick writes i.e. the invocation of absolute and inviolable individual rights puts him outside the contemporary debate, his rigorous individualism and anti-statism alerted social theorists to the possibility that many welfare goals could be satisfied outside the formal apparatus of government. Since his criticism of the state is that it leads to coercion, there is a theoretical possibility that voluntary activity outside the price mechanism could solve at least some of today's welfare problems.

The experience of post-war welfare in western democracies has cast doubts on not just the ethical desirability of entrusting collective institutions with the delivery of what came to be called typical welfare services such as health, education arid insurance, but the efficiency of the method as well. The unexpected expansion of these services and the huge share of GNP absorbed by them have led to serious criticism from both the Left and the Right. The difficulty arises primarily from a confusion whether the role of the state is to provide a minimum standard of well being to those who are the victims of market economy or a broader conception that envisages collective institutions as prima facie appropriate for the satisfaction of a potentially limitless range of human wants. In what sense can the common provision of, say, education and health, enhance welfare in the sense understood by the philosophers of the welfare state? The welfare state is characterized by what public economists called 'churning', whereby services are funded by tax revenue which are then returned to the citizens in the form of collective and often compulsory services such as unemployment insurance. It is not quite clear what the rationale for this is, because the compulsory nature of many features of the welfare state means that individual choice is suppressed; thus, the actual structure of the system does not reflect peoples' preferences. Critics have also expressed doubts as to how far the welfare state has been able to provide social justice. For example, the empirical enquiries into the delivery of welfare services in Britain revealed that redistribution has helped the middle income groups and there is reliable evidence that it is a universal feature of all democratic societies. This is known in political economy as 'Director's Law'. Put at its simplest, this law holds that since in advanced western democracies, the probable majority of voters is neither rich nor poor, whatever redistribution takes place is likely to go to it. Also, well- intentioned welfare policies help one group while unintentionally harm the other. Familiar examples are the rent control laws which, by freezing the supply of rented accommodation, causes homelessness or the minimum wage legislation; which renders unemployed potential workers whose marginal productivity is lower than the decreed minimum. A more ethical argument is that excessive welfare produces a dependency culture which is quite inconducive to good citizenship. A major example for such arguments refers to the debates which followed the creation of 'the Great Society' programme of President Johnson. This was a massive programme of welfare intervention by the state which provided a good test case for many critics of state welfare. It cost about US200 billion dollars per year and included programmes Iike rnedicards, aid to families of dependent children and food stamps to about 50 million people. Implicit in this argument was that capitalism was the cause of deprivation. It should be stressed that the designers of the scheme did not want to create a welfare society, but only to aid temporarily and to enhance individual autonomy. There is some agreement among observers that the system has not fulfilled its aims. Although the number of people below the poverty line did reduce, this was not because more people had achieved individual autonomy, but because more had become dependent on the new welfare payments- Charles Murray makes a distinction between people in poverty, i.e. people who really need help and well- being, and 'latent poverty' i.e. people who would be deprived were it not for the existence of state welfare. According to him, though latent poverty fell to 18% when the scheme was introduced but as the scheme progressed, the figure began to rise and it reached 22 % in 1980. Also, there was the breakdown of traditional family structures and the rise of illcgititnacy due to the new benefits for unmarried mothers. This seems then to be evidence of moral hazard on a massive scale. Although there is some dispute about the figures, most commentators argue at least that the great society programme has failed to reduce the numbers on welfare.

The critics of citizenship theory also maintain that the ideal ofcitizenship does grant individuals a claim on the resources of the community, but that it must be accompanied by corresponding

social duties. The individuals are not anonymous agents held together by general rules of just conduct and the cash nexus, but are identifiable members of particular communities defined in terms of a complex network of social rights and duties. Work must be treated as a social obligation akin to paying taxes and obeying the law. Lawrence Mead's objection to the 'Great Society Scheme' was that its benefits were distributed as entitlements requiring no duties on the part of the beneficiary. In other words, what is required is a stronger and perhaps bigger state to enforce the social obligation of work that is relative to the receipt of welfare. But this could lead to less liberty.

There is a growing recognition that the welfare of the individual is a personal affair which is not necessarily enhanced by over- reliance on the state. A person's welfare is advanced in ways other than mere increase in income; it is as much a function of personal esteem and individual autonomy. Critics of the welfare state have such non -economic measures of value in mind when they comment on interventionist measures of whatever type which have a tendency to produce dependency and an 'anti-work ethics'. It is also argued that the phenomenon of poverty and deprivation is partly a social or cultural problem. It is not caused simply by a scarcity of resources. but by the institutional arrangements which encourage the perpetuation of the malaise they are designed to alleviate. During the 20th century, the direction of causation has been from the complex structure of welfare institutions to the reproduction of welfare problems. It is being felt that the times arc propitious for a fundamental re-examination of the whole issue. The return of education, health, pension and so on to individuals through various methods of empowerment such as the vouclier scheme could mark the beginnings of a new consensus. Also, it is felt that the decentralization of welfare services to smaller political units would be a more feasible way of advancing the moral claims and the attendant social obligations associated with citizenship.

16.6 CRISIS IN THE WELFARE STATE: AN ASSESSMENT

The 1990s are witness to a real setback to the welfare state. The underlying problem has been financial. It was argued that the welfare states are expensive. As the average age of population increases, so the total cost of welfare services such as medical care, pensions, education also increase whereas the working population which shoulders the burden declines in number. Thus the demand on the welfare state increases when the supply is low. For example, when unemployment goes up, the expenditure on unemployment pay also increases but the tax collected from the workers goes down. Thus, the recession of the 1980s caused many doubts with regard to the welfare programmes. Again, the international pressures also matter. If the cost of welfare in one state is higher than the other, the economy loses its international competitiveness. As Pierson has pointed out, tlie move to a more open international economy has curtailed opportunities for further development of the national welfare state. **And** lastly, the impact of welfare on the willingness to work is also a problem confronting the welfare state. If people are assured of pay and other benefits, they do not work. And it affects those who have to give a substantial amount of their earnings in tax deductions in order to pay for the welfare benefits. In many countries, public support for the welfare state has declined very sharply. Thus, in tlie present crisis of the welfare state, the major point of debate is whether the state is an agency of redistribution of wealth and services from the rich to the poor or should it only provide a 'safety net', establishing a minimum level of welfare beneath which no one would be allowed to fall. The present trend favours only a safety net.

16.7 SUMMARY

Welfare state was the result of the transformation of classical liberalism into positive liberalism in the 20th century. A thoroughgoing revision of liberal theory required a re-examination of the nature and functions of the state, the nature of liberty, equality, justice, the relationship between liberty and legal coercion. Instead of the state being regarded as a necessary evil, positive liberalism considered the state as a positive good, an agency of individual and social welfare and a guardian of the common interests of society.

The ideas ofpositive liberalism were initiated by J.S. Mill, T.H. Green, D. Richie, Hobson in the nineteenth century and were perpetuated by Harold Laski, R.M. MacIver, J.M. Keynes, Galbraith in the inter-war period.

The welfare state attempted to reconcile the interest of the individual with that of the society so that the essentials of the capitalist system would be preserved while at the same time, removing its ill-effects.The purpose of the state is not only to preserve the law and order, but also to serve the common interest and perform welfare services.

Through the instrument of the welfare state, positive liberalism used the power of the state to guarantee the individuals a minimum income irrespective of the market value of their work, to help the people in meeting social contingencies like sickness, old age, unemployment, and all citizens irrespective of social class are offered an agreed range of social services. In other words, the welfare state was to ensure that all the citizens get a minimum standard of health, economic security and civilized living and can share according to their capacity in its social and culture heritage.

Liberalism believes that the welfare state must also be a democratic state, possessing a certain formal institutional mechanism which is considered essential in a liberal democratic society. Any state which is welfarist, but not democratic from the institutional point of view, cannot be regarded a liberal state. In other words, the term welfare state is used only for the states of those capitalist countries which undertake the positive task of providing welfare and when the government preserves the formal democratic institutional framework.

The welfare state operates within the framework of the market economy i.e. capitalist mode of production. But it believes that the unrestrained operation of the market can prove dangerous for the individual and the economy. It believes that poverty, dependencies, economic insecurity etc. are not a result of the consequences of nature and incompetence on the part of the poor, but result from the changeable institutions of society. These insecurities can be overcome by remodelling the *laissez faire* economy and by introducing a form of planning to realize these objectives. But planning should be combined with a market economy in various degrees. It stands for a 'mixed economy'.

Positive liberalism has given various justifications for the welfare state, such as it enhances the liberty and autonomy of the individual, it brings more equality among the various classes in society, it provides social justice, it creates a responsible citizenship, it pravides socio-economic justice by restrainingand regulating capitalism . However, there have been continuing debates about how to distribute welfare such as i) should it be 'selectively given to those in need or it should be universal', ii) should it be in kind or cash, iii) should it be on the insurance principle fundkd by the people themselves or simple redistribution, and v) should there be a

constitutional guarantee for the welfare or should it be left to the bargaining groups, vi) should the welfare state guarantee a safety net of minimum well- being for those unable to survive the market society or the idea of market is opposed to welfare.

The concept of welfare state has been also a target of attack, particularly from the libertarian philosophers. They believe that the welfare state reduces the liberty and autonomy of the individual, leads to coercion and violates the rights of the individual. At a more general level, in the developed countries which have adopted the welfare model, there is the largest concentration of wealth and technological potentialities. Neither has the state been able to remove the insecurities which are considered avoidable. Welfare measures irrespective of pension, tax free sums, compensation for loss of office, life insurance, sickness, higher education, housing etc are concentrated on the better off one-third of the population. Unemployment and creeping inflation still remain the permanent problems of welfare state. The ideals of liberal equalitarianism are not wrong, but they require reforms far more extensive than have been suggested by John Racvls and others.

16.8 EXERCISES

1) Trace the evolution of positive liberalism.

2) Write an essay on the liberal democratic welfare state.

3) Discuss the grounds on which the welfare state is justified.

4) Comment on the contemporary debates on the welfare state.

5) Critically assess the welfare state today.

UNIT 17 LIBERTARIANISM

Structure

17.1 Introduction
17.2 What is Libertarianism?
17.3 Political Theory of Libertarianism
17.3.1 Individualism
17.2.2 Individual Rights and Liberty
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17.4 Critical Evaluation
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17.1 INTRODUCTION

With the rise of liberalism as a theory of welfare state in the twentieth century, its functions increased manifold. It was during this transformation that the state acquired its present all-pervasive form. However, the fight for classical liberalism was not given up. After the Second World War. an important contribution to the theory of liberalism was made by theorists whose allegiance lay with early classical liberalism. This new movement which became popular in the USA and England in the 1960s is known by the name, Libertarianism. Many libertarian texts have been written by people who only know North American political culture and society. They claim universal application for libertarianism, but it remains culture bound. The libertarian movement received large scale academic attention with the appearance in 1974 of a book *Anarchy, State and Utopia* by the Harvard philosopher Robert Nozick. The work achieved great acclaim for its brilliance of argument and was frequently bracketed with Rawls's A *Theory of Justice*. It inlluenced the Thatcher/Reagan administrations of the 1980s. Etymologically, libertarianism means free will or free advocacy of liberty. It is the most radical form of individualism and advocarcs pure capitalist economy, as the surest expression and defence of individuality. In political theory, it answers once again the fundamental question i.e. what are the legitimate functions of the state – in a radical way. Holding the liberty of the individual as sacrosanct. libertarianism asserts that welfare measures can lead to a collectivist state. I-Iere one can ask: if the liberal principles have been rooted in American and English political culture, then why has this new term come into use. According to Martin Masse, this is because liberalism since the end of the 19th century has taken up a new meaning, which is not at all compatible with the defence of individual freedom. While in the U.K., the so-called liberal parties are only a little more moderate than the socialists parties in their inclination to use state power, in the United States, a liberal was considered a left winger who advocated wealth redistribution and supported a big government that interferes everywhere in peoples" lives; a government that tries to solve all real and imaginary problems by taxing and spending and creating bureaucratic programmes for each good cause. In short, today's liberalism aims at creating a tyrannical state that does riot hesitate to trample on individual freedom in the

name of an unattainable collectivist utopia. This type of liberalism has nothing to do with classical liberalism. Libertarianism, on the other hand, is inspired by former periods of liberal progress but after one century during which collectivist and totalitarian ideologies have dominated, they realizeed that classical liberalism was not strong or principled enough to stem the rising tide of statism. They are more coherent or some may say radical than traditional liberals in their defence of personal liberty and market economy and in their opposition to state power. Libertarian scholars have shown that it is the decentralized action of the individuals who pursue their own ends in a free markct which makes it possible to create and maintain this spontaneous order to bring prosperity and to support the complex civilization in which we live.

17.2 WHAT IS LIBERTARIANISM?

Much political and moral philosophy over the past three centuries has concerned itself with human liberty. The philosophical outlook on politics known as libertarianism takes this idea to its extreme, proposing to make liberty, the only interest that a state may properly have with respect to its citizen:;.

The libertarian philosophy has been propounded by a number of scholars, prominent among them are F.A. Hayek, Karl Popper, Talmon, Milton Friedman, I. Berlin, M. Rothbard, Robert Nozick, Ayn Rand. Taking liberty as the ultimate value, it asserts that in order to protect liberty, a society must have strong private property rights, a free market and minimal government. Some writers have termed libertarianism as 'freedom'. The best wily to understand the various terms is to know what libertarians believe in. In a few words, libertarianism believes that individual freedom is the fundamental value that must underlie all social relations, economic exchanges and the political system. Essentially libertarians preach freedom in all fields including the right to do what one wants with one's sown body insofar as one does not infringe on the property and equal freedom of others. They believe that voluntary cooperation between individuals in a free market is always preferable to coercion exerted by the state. They believe that the role of the state is not to pursue goals in the name of the community. The state is not there to redistribute wealth, 'promote' culture, 'support' the agriculture sector or 'help' small firms, but should limit itself to the protection of individual rights and let citizens pursue their own goals in a peaceful way. Libertarianism supports the formal equality of each and all before the law, but it worries little about the inequalities between the rich and the poor, inequalities which are inevitable and can bc reduced only by encroaching on personal freedom and by reducing overall prosperity. For them the best way to fight poverty is to guarantee a system of free enterprise and free trade and to let private charity initiatives which are more effective and better justified morally than state programmes of wealth transfer, come to the rescue of those in need. Libertarians believe that the only way to ensure the maintenance of' personal freedom is to guarantee the inviolability of private property and to limit as much as possible the size of the government and the scope of its interventions. They do not trust the state in protecting individual liberty.

Libertarianism is opposed to collectivist ideologies of all types, be it of the left or of the right which stress the primacy of the group, nation, social class, sexual or ethnic group, religious or language community etc. 'They oppose all whose purpose is to regiment individuals in the pursuit of collective goals. They do not deny the relevance of these collective identities, but claim that it is up to the individuals themselves to determine which group they wish to belong

and contribute to. It is not for the state or for institutions that derive their power from the state to impose their own objectives in a bureaucratic and coercive manner.

Thus, libertarianism rejects the main political developments of the 20th century; that is, the sustained growth in the size of the state and the range of its interventions in the private lives of the citizens. It is the only one that demands and works for radical change, a drastic reduction of the size and role of the state, they are the only ones who value individual freedom, above all else. More and more people realize that libertarianism constitutes the only alternative. The libertarian movement hardly existed in the 1960s but really took off in the Unites States in the early 1970s. Whereas collectivist philosophies and Keynesian economics used to dominate academic life, recently there has been a revival of interest in classical liberalism and free market economy throughout the world. After a century of eclipse, classical liberalism in its libertarian offspring is becoming an influential philosophical doctrine and movement in the 21st century.

Like all philosophical movements, libertarianism is varied, containing several schools and sub-groups and one will find no unanimity about its theoretical justifications, its goals or the strategy that should be adopted to reach them. Mainly, there are two types of libertarianism and each has its own answers to the queries. One group, the anarchists or also known as '*anarcho-capitalists*' advocate the complete disappearance of the state and privatisation of even the basic functions mentioned above. This goal may appear extreme or ridiculous at first sight, but it is based on a theoretically plausible argument. It is for example, easy to imagine that one could replace provincial state or municipal police forces (with the corruption, abuses of power, the incompetence and favouritism which usually characterize them all and often with impunity) with private security agencies. These would make profits only in so far as they really protect citizens and fight real criminals. Anarcho-capitalists use the same type of arguments to support the privatisation of the army and the courts which would leave nothing for a state to do. Private firms would then provide all the services that individuals might need in a pure free market. In a context where public spending now accounts for almost half of all that is produced, where governments continue to adopt law after law so as to increase their control over our life, a more realistic libertarian goal is simply to reverse this trend and fight for any practical advance of freedom and any concrete reduction in state tyranny. The other branch is known as '*miniarchists*' who maintain that government may appropriately engage in police protection, enforcement of contracts and national defence, foreign relations, justice, the protection of private property and individual rights. All remaining functions should be privatised. In the context of a very decentralized federal state, libertarians accept, however, that local authorities can intervene in other fields and offer various types of social and economic arrangements in so far as dissatisfied citizens can easily move to other jurisdictions. Definitely not included, according to miniarchists, is the power to tax, even to secure money for the functions just mentioned,

The question arises: why the libertarians endorse these views so sharply at variance with most political theory? Firstly, libertarians hold an extremely strong doctrine of individual rights, particularly the right of individuals to acquire and hold property. Their concept of property rights and freedom of contract excludes welfare rights, since claims to these rights require in the libertarian view compulsory labour of some on behalf of other. Secondly, libertarians believe that the operation of an unrestricted system of *laissez faire* capitalism is the most desirable social system. People unfettered by state compulsions would be likely to establish this sort of economic system and it is all for the best that they do. We shall study all these aspects in detail in the next section.

17.3 POLITICAL THEORY OF LIBERTARIANISM

It is claimed that the key concepts of the political theory of libertarianism have developed over many centuries. The first inklings of them can be found in ancient China, Greece and Israel; they began to be developed into something resembling modern libertarian philosophy in the work of such seventeenth and eighteenth century thinkers as John Locke, David Hume, Adam Smith, Thomas Jefferson and Thomas Paine. In the twentieth century, they were reinvented by neo-liberal thinkers such as Michael Oakeshott, F.A. Hayek, Milton Friedman, Robert Nozick etc. While these scholars have given a new intellectual impetus to the libertarian movement, a growing concern for personal autonomy has provided personal ground for the sowing of the idea. Some of the important concepts of libertarian theory are as follows:

17.3.1 Individualism

While the libertarian ideal of individualism has certain family resemblance with the neo-classical defence of capitalism, anarcho-individualism and classical liberalism, it is reducible to none of these. Libertarianism can only be understood against the backdrop of the emergence of totalitarianism and the modern welfare state since the 1930s .Libertarians see the individual as the basic unit of social analysis. Only individuals make choices and are responsible for their actions. Libertarian thought emphasizes the dignity of the individual, which entails both rights and responsibility. The progressive extension ofdignity to more people – to women, to people ofdifferent religions and different races– is one of the great libertarian triumphs of the western world.

Libertarianism represents the most radical form of individualism, short of outright anarchism. Along with it, it exalts the pure capitalist economy as the surest expression and defence of individuality. Nevertheless, the near anarchism of some libertarian doctrines have prompted the expression 'anarcho-capitalism. However, the libertarian defence of capitalism would legitimise a degree of economic inequality that true anarchists could not abide. The works of Ayn Rand are a leading expression of the libertarian ideal of individualism, even it' it sometimes takes an extreme and occasionally unrepresentative form. A brilliant novelist, she developed the libertarian ideal both in fictional works and polemical essays. Utterly rejecting any theological notions or ideas that rank the community over the individual, she held that the individual is tlie basic unit of society, the prime focus of moral concern and the sole source of human creativity. According to her, the root cause of our modern troubles is the philosophy of *altruism*, a moral position that effectively destroys the supreme value of individuality. Altruism - the notion that man should place the welfare of others above his own- is the root of all evils and not money. Indeed, money is cherished as the just reward and fair estimation of the individual's inherent excellence. For Rand, altruism is a vice and selfishness is a virtue, though selfishness does not mean a petty snivelling self-indulgence but accepting full personal responsibility for one's life and fate. Altruism is the villain of the piece because it plays upon the morbid guilt feelings of the donor and keeps the recipient in a state of childish subservience. Neither party can develop a mature confident outlook on life which should culminate in a fair and equitable and truly voluntary exchange of goods and services. The ethics of altruism is always gratuitous; it preaches that someone has a prescriptive right to a free ride on someone else's back. According to this theory, the notion that one person should sacrifice himself for the sake of another is radically evil. It is an affront to human dignity and an open invitation to prefer death over life.

17.3.2 Individual Rights and Liberty

Central to libertarianism is the claim that the individual should be free from the interference of others. Personal liberty is the supreme moral good. Hence, one's liberty can justifiably be restricted only if he consents to the restriction. Any other restriction, including taxing incomes for the purpose of redistribution is unjust. In other words, the libertarians couch their theory in the language of rights. Each individual has natural negative rights - to atleast life, liberty and property. No one can justifiably harm him, restrict his freedom, or take his property, i.e., no one can violate his rights without his consent. Moreover, these are general rights; they apply, so to speak, against the whole world. And since rights invariably have correlative duties, all the people in the world liave the duty not to interfere with the rightholder's life, liberty and property. Each person possesses these rights simply by virtue of his humanity – he does not have to do anything to obtain this moral protection. The possession of rights does not depend upon the consent of others. They are essential moral constituents of personhood. They are not granted by the government or by the society; they arc inherent in the nature ol'human beings. It is intuitively right that individuals enjoy the security of such rights; the burden of explanation should lie with those who would take these rights away. Libertarian theorists often move back and forth between talk of negative rights and talk of' liberty. This, according to Hugh La Follette, is because they ultimately see rights and liberty as equivalent or because they hold a theory of rights which is grounded in personal liberty. There are no circumstances in which the negative general rights can be justifiably overridden in which one's liberty can be justifiably limited without his consent. For example, A's right to properly (or life or liberty) can never be overridden for the benefit of others (to satisfy the alleged positive rights of others). 'A' can choose to charitably give his property to someone or he can voluntarily give someone a positive right to his property. Nevertheless, morally he cannot be forced – either by legal sanctions or moral rules – to give up his life, liberty or property. This moral/legal prohibition insures that an individual's liberty cannot be restricted in any way without his consent.

In the context of rights, what is important to note is that libertarians make a distinction between negative and positive rights. For example, take the general right to life; in its negative version, it says that only others must not kill (or take the life of) the rightholder but in its positive version, it would also require that others do something to help save the rightholder's *life* if it is possible for them to do so. The importance of this distinction is that tlie libertarian holds that people have no basic positive rights – that all positive obligations have to be in some way assured or undertaken by the obligated individual i.e. by promising that he will perform the indicated action.

Thus, we see two important features of libertarianism. First the primary purpose of negative *general rights* is the protection of individual liberty, to ensure that no one's life is restricted without his consent. Or as Nozick puts it: 'side constraints (which arc equivalent to negntive general rights) upon action reflect the underlying Kantian principle that individuals are ends and not merely means; they cannot be sacrificed or used for the achieving of other ends without their consent...(these constraints reflect the fact of our separate existences)'. They reflect the fact that no more balancing act can take place among us. Secondly, the libertarian holds that a sufficient reason to reject any alleged moral rule or principle of distributive justice is that such a rule or principle restricts someone's freedom without his consent. Hayek, for example, argues that we should reject plans to expand governmental roles since such expansion necessarily undermines individual liberty. And Nozick's primary objection to Rawls is that Rawls's, twa principles restrict individual liberty without consent.

As mentioned above, much political and moral philosophy over the centuries has concerned itself with human liberty. However, the philosophical outlook on politics known as libertarianism, takes this idea to its extreme, proposing to make liberty the only interest that a state may properly have with respect to its citizens..Libertarianism takes liberty as our sole *right* (this is also called 'deontological libertarianism*)against considering liberty as ***the*** *sole* value to be promoted by the government and the individual. The point of malting liberty a general right is to prevent the government from forcing people to do things. According to it, our sole fundamental right is the right to liberty, all other rights are subordinate to that—they are either special cases of that one or derived from it directly or indirectly.

Just like the concept of negative rights, libertarianism also emphasizes the negative aspect of libcrty i.e., liberty as absence of'imposition by other people, specifically those impositions that are caused by their intentional actions. In this version, each person is to be entitled to do as that person likes, or judges best, except only when his or her action would impose on others – would interfere with the intended desired courses of action of someone else or (if this is different) damage that person, in the sense of' doing what that person did not want to be done with or to his or her body or mind. It is as Hobbes called it 'absence of external impediments' or 'seeking peace'; that is, of not 'making war' on others; or as Locke termed it 'not harming them in respect of life, health, liberty or property'; or Kant's version of 'acting only on maxims that can coexist alongwith the freedom of the will of each and all'. These have been echoed in the contemporary American philosopher John Rawls' formulation of a liberty principle that 'each person participating in a practice, or affected by it. has an equal right to the most extensive basic liberty compatible with a similar liberty for others'. What is important in all these versions is that tlie emphasis is on the negative liberty; people encounter each other and in doing so they are to refrain from actions that would cause the other person harm, danger, disease and the like. Any other actions are permissible whether or not they have the effect of 'maximising' something. Again coercion is also thought to collide with liberty. Libertarians also take liberty as the 'absence of coercion' and they condemn it along with overt force. Liberty is the absence of obstacles, imposed costs; the coercer does impose a cost on liis victim.

The natural baseline to which libertarians appeal for liberty is our body. The libertarians hold that we ought to make anyone's libcrty into a right; that is, we ought to make it the case that imposition or proposed impositions against anyone's liberty is a ground for taking action to rectify or prevent them, and that is what the libertarian principle does. This right is equivalent to the right of self-ownership. Each person would be regarded as 'owning himself' in the same straightforward sense as that in which we can own all sorts of things such as cars and footballs; namely, being able to do what one wants to with the self in question; at the same time, one is not able to do that with others; rather, their willingness or consent must be established before one may do things with others.

And last but not the least, why would people value liberty'? For the libertarians, liberty is not another good like peanut butter or a car, it is rather a necessary condition of' action, in the sense that if we do x, it has to have been the case by definition that nothing prevented us from doing it. Liberty is the condition of being able to do whatever it is, the liberty to do which is in question. In other words,, it is not really up in the air whether liberty is a good thing or not. Liberty is us good as whatever can bc achieved by acting. According to libertarians, liberty is not a value, it is a condition of action.

17.3.3 Civil Society

A great degree of order in society is necessary for individuals to survive and flourish. It is easy to assume that order must be imposed by a central authority, the way we impose order on a stamp collection or a football team. The great insight of libertarian social analysis is that order in society arises spontaneously, out of the action of thousands or millions of individuals who coordinate their action with those of others in order to achieve their purpose, over human history. We have gradually opted for more freedom and yet managed to develop a complex society with an intricate organization. The most important organization in human society – law, language, money and markets – all deveioped spontaneously without central direction. Civil society is another example of spontaneous order, the associations within civil society are formed for a purpose, but civil society itself is not an organization and does not have a purpose of its own. The associations we form with others can make up what we call civil society. Those associations can take an amazing variety of forms – family, churches, schools, clubs, fraternal societies, condominium associations, neighbourhood groups and the myriad forms of commercial society such as partnerships, corporations, labour unions and trade associations. All these associations serve human needs in different ways. Civil society may be broadly defined as all the natural and voluntary associations in society. Some analysts distinguish between commercial and tion-profit organizations, arguing that business is a part of the market and not of civil society, but according to Bauz, the real distinction is between associations that are coercive i.e. the state, and those that are natural or voluntary – everything else. Whether a particular association is established to malte a profit or to achieve some other purpose, the key characteristi'c is that our participation in it is voluntarily chosen. It should be noted that the associations within the civil society are created to achieve a particular purpose but civil society, as a whole has no purpose. It is the undersigned, spontaneously emerging result of all those purposive associations. These associations give people connections with other people. No one of them, however, exhausts one's personality and defines one completely. In this libertarian conception, we connect to different people in different ways on the basis of free and voluntary consent. Ernest Gellner says that modern civil society requires a 'modular man'. Instead of a man who is entirely the product of and absorbed by a particular culture, modular man 'can combine into specific purpose, *ad hoc*, limited associations, without binding himself by some blood ritual'. He can form links with others which are 'effective even though are flexible, specific, instrumental,' and as individuals combine in myriad ways, community emerges; not the close community of the village or the messianic community promised by, say for example, by marxism, national socialism and all fulfilling religions, but a community of free individuals in voluntary chosen associations. Individuals do not emerge from community, community emerges from individuals. It emerges not because anyone plans it, certainly not because the state creates it, but because it must. To fulfil their needs and desires, individuals must combine with others. Society is an association of individuals governed by legal rules or perhaps an association of associations, but not one large community, or one family. Membership in a group need not diminish one's individuality; it con amplify it, by freeing people from the limits they face as lone individuals and increasing their opportunities to achieve their own goals. Such a view of the community requires that membership bc chosen and nut compulsory.

17.3.4 Political Economy and the Problem of Redistribution

Libertarianism claims that the only economic order that respects individual freedom is the *free market*. To them, the free market is an example of freedom in action. At the heart of the free market is the voluntary bilateral exchange. If two parties exchange some goods voluntarily

or make some contract voluntarily, then so long as this does not involve the violation of another's rights, no one has the right to interfere in it. According to libertarians, the free market is tlie sum of the voluntary exchanges and contracts going on in a society, nothing more and nothing less. Any distribution that occurs in the operation of a free market is therefore, just since at no stage has anyone's right been violated and all the exchanges were voluntary. For example, Hayek proposed that the rules of conduct in a society are evolving; that they survive because they are useful and help that society survive. The market, he believed, had survived the test of time, in that the most successful societies were market based in some way. The market is superior to other economic systems, since it handles human ignorance by passing information in coded form through the price mechanism which indicates areas where profits could be made and resources efficiently used. It does all this and allocates resources without being predicated on any specific goals or assuming what the goals of the people are. It also facilitates freedom, in that for it to work, there need to be rules demarcating 'protected domains' for each person where no other has the right to interfere.

The market arises from the fact that humans can accomplish more in cooperation with each other than individually and the Sact that, we can recognize this. If we were a species for whom cooperation was not more productive than isolated work, or if we were unable to discern the benefits of cooperation, then we would not only remain isolated and atomistic, but as Ludwig Von Mises explains, 'each man would have been forced to view all other men as his enemies, his craze for the satisfaction of his own appetites would have brought him into an implacable conflict with all his neighbours'. Without the possibility of mutual benefit from cooperation and the division of labour. neither feelings of sympathy and friendship nor the market order itself could arise. Those who say that 'humans are made for cooperation, and not competition' fail to recognize that the market is cooperation.

Many people accept that markets are necessary, but still feel that there is something vaguely immoral about them; they feel that markets lead to inequality or they dislike tlie self- interest reflected in markets. Markets are often called 'brutal' or 'dog-eats-dog'. But libertarians believe that markets are not only essential to economic progress, but that they are more consensual and lead to more virtue and equality than government coercion. This is done through: i) information and coordination, ii) prices, iii) efficiency in production, iv) technological innovations, and v) competition. Firstly, markets are based on consent. No businessman sends an invoice for a product not ordered. No business can force anyone to trade. Businessmen try to find out what is required by the consumers. Whatever is produced is done so in response to or in anticipation of consumer demand, since the only way in which the producers can maximize his own position is by selling his goods to the consuming population. But where do they get the information? It is not in a massive book. In the market economy, it is not ernbodied in orders from a planning agency. Secondly, this vital information about other peoples' wants is embodied in prices. Prices do not just tell us how much something costs at the store. The price system pulls together, all the information available in the economy about what each person wants, how much he values it and how it can best be produced. Prices make that information usable to the producer and the consumer. Each price contains within it information about consumer demands and about costs of production, ranging from the amount of labour needed to produce the item to the cost of labour to the bad weather on the other side of the world that is raising the price of tlie raw materials needed to produce the good. The information that prices deliver allows people to work together to produce more. The point of an economy is not just to produce more things. It is to produce more things tliat people want. Prices tell all of us what otlier people want. The price system reflects the choices of millions of producers,

consumers, and resource owners who may never meet and coordinates their efforts. Although we can never feel affection for or even meet everyone in the economy, market prices help to work together to produce more of what everyone wants. Unlike a government which at best takes the will of the majority and imposes it on everyone, market uses prices to let buyers and sellers freely decide what they want to do with their money. Thirdly, competition between producers ensures that the most efficient ones to supply the consumer market since only they will be able to produce goods cheaply. The consumer, in maximizing his economic welfare, purchases only at the lowest available price. Fourthly, since producers can improve their economic position by expanding their market, each producer will be in constant competition with others. Seeking to expand one's market can be accomplished only by reducing prices (price competition), and this can be achieved only by reducing production costs via technological innovations. The system automatically generates technological change and development. And lastly, the market system is highly competitive. As explained above, it is precisely through competition that it can be found how things can be produced at the least cost, by discovering who will sell raw material or labour services for the lowest price. Any interference with fire competition between economic units will defeat the system's ability to provide automatically the advantages described above. Also rapid and smooth shifts of labour and capital must be possible from one industry to another. People are motivated by material well being and by economic gain. Hence, to the extent that they are deprived of economic incentives, the market mechanism will break dawn or seriously compromised as a basis for allocation of'goods and service!;. The basic question, according to libertarians, is how to combine all the resources in society including human effort to produce the greatest possible output which will satisfy people most. It is through competition lo attract new customers that this coordination is generated. It is possible that many firms may not do well and could be out of business. This, according to libertarians, is the 'creative destruction' of the market. Harsh as the consumers' judgement may feel to someone who loses a job or an investment, the market works on tlie principle of equality. In a free market, no firm gets special privileges from tlie government and each must constantly satisfy consumers to stay in business. Thus, far from inducing self-interest, as critics charge, in the market place the fact of sell.'-interest induces people to serve others. Markets reward honesty because people are more willing to do business with those who have a reputation for honesty. Markets reward civility because people prefer to deal with courteous partners and suppliers.

Apart from defending market freedoms and limitations on the use of the state for social welfare policies , libertarians are opposed to any *redistributive* taxation scheme. It believes that redistributive taxation is inherently wrung, a violation of the people's right. People have a right to dispose of their goods and services freely. As Nozick put it, 'people have rights and there are things no person or group may do to them (without violating their rights). So strong and far reaching arc these rights that they raise the question of what, if anything, a state and its' officials may do'. This has been best explained by Robert Nozick in his famous entitlement theory.

The central theme of the *Entitlement Theory* is that 'if' we assume that everyone is entitled to the goods they currently possess (their holdings) then a just distribution is simply whatever distribution results from peoples' free exchanges. Any distribution that arises by free transfer from a just situation is itself just. For the government to tax these exchanges against anyone's will is unjust, even if the taxes are used to compensate for the extra cost of someone's undeserved natural handicap. The only legitimate taxation is to raise revenues for maintaining the background institutions needed to protect the system of free exchange i.e. the police and

the justice system needed to enforce peoples' free exchanges. This entitlement theory is based upon three principles: i)the *principle of transfer* i.e. whatever is justly acquired can be freely transferred, ii) the *principle of just initial acquisition* i.e. how people come to own things initially, which can be transferred according to the first principle, iii) *principle of rectification of injustice*, i.e. how to deal with acquisitions which are unjustly acquired or transferred. To given an example, if I own a plot of land, the principle of transfer tells me to engage in any transfer I wish. The principle of acquisition tells me how the plot initially came to be owned, and the principle of rectification of justice tells me what to do if the first two principles are violated. Taken together, if peoples' current holdings are justly acquired. then the formula of just distribution is: *from each as they choose, to each as they are chosen.*

Nozick gives two arguments as to why the claim of peoples' entitlement should be accepted: i) *free exercise of property* is *more attractive*, and ii) *property right lies in 'self-ownership'*. The first argument i.e. free exercise of property is more attractive; it is that if wc have legitimately acquired something, we have absolute property rights over if. Then we can freely dispose it off as we see fit, even though the effect of these transfers is iikely to he a massively unequal distribution of income and opportunity. Given that some people are born with different natural talents, some people will be amply rewarded while those who lack marketable skills will get few rewards. Due to these under served differences in natural talents, sornc people will flourish while others will starve. These inequalities are the result of unrestrained capitalism. Though he admits that it seems unfair for people to suffer undeserved inequalities in their access to the benefits of social cooperation, but the problem is that people have rights over their income. As he says, 'no one has a right to something whose realization requires certain uses of things and activities that other people have rights and entitlements.' The *second* argument is the principle of 'self–ownership'. By this Nozick means that people should be treated as 'end-in-themselves'. The heart of Nozick's theory is that 'individuals have rights, and there are things no person or group may do to them (without violating their rights)'. Society must respect these rights because 'they reflect the underlying Kantian principle that individuals are ends and not merely means. They may not bc sacrificed or used for the achievements of others' ends, without their consent'. Because we are distinct individuals with distinct claims, there are limits to the sacrifices that can be asked of one person for the benefit of others. Libertarian society treats individuals not 'as instruments or resources' but as 'persons having individual rights with the dignity this constitutes.' In short entitlement theory believes that recognizing people as self-owners is crucial to treating people as equal, and only unrestricted capitalism recognizes self-ownership.

17.3.5 Rule of law & Limited Government

Libertarianism is not libertinism or hedonism. It is not a claim that 'people can do anything they want to and nobody else can say anything'. Rather, libertarianism proposes a society of liberty under law, in which individuals are free to pursue their own lives so long as they respect the equal rights of others. The rule of law means that individuals are governed by generally applicable and spontaneously developed legal rules, not by arbitrary commands; and that those rules should protect the freedom of individuals to pursue happiness in their own way, not aim at any particular result or outcome.

To protect rights, individuals form governments, but government is a dangerous institution. As stated above, libertarianism arose as a reaction against the social welfare state. Hayck in his book *The Road to Serfdom* warned tliat the adoption of welfare/socialist policies would

bring totalitarian government in the long run. Any tolerable future for the western civilization would demand that the socialist ideas be abandoned and classical liberalism may be restored once again. Like early liberals, he considered the state the greatest enemy and any interference with the right to private property as an assault upon the rights of the individuals. On the economic side, Milton Friedman suggested that competitive capitalism promotes political freedom because it separates economic power from political power and in this way, enables one to offset the other. Another writer Ralf Dahrendorf complained that the welfare state produces the iron cage of bureaucratic bondage and to a great extent repeated the traditional liberal attitude of suspicion towards the government and the state. As lie writes, 'there is no such thing as benevolent government. Government is an unfortunate necessity. It is always and by definition liable to encroach upon the individual liberties. More than that, there is a need for less government'.

A more powerful definition of the libertarian view of the minimal state has been developed by Robert Nozick in his book *Anarchy, State and Utopia.* Nozick talks about the state in the context of individual rights. Following the tradition of John Locke, Nozick speaks of prior and inalienable rights of the individual possessed independent of society. He says that rights are the property of the individual and are so strong and far reaching that they raise a number of basic questions such as: what, if anything, the state may do? How much mom do individual rights leave for tho state? What is the nature of the state? What are its legitimate functions and what is its justification? The state, according to Nozick, should be a minimal state, limited to the narrow functions of protection against force, theft, fraud, enforcement of contract and so on. Any more extensive state will violate the person's right not to be forced to do certain things and as such would be unjustified. 'The minimal state is inspiring as well as right'. What is important is that the state must not use its coercive apparatus for the purpose of getting some citizen to aid others, and prohibit activities of people for their own good or protection.

Since Nozick strongly believes in tlie rights of the individuals, he seriously considers the anarchists' claim that the monopoly of use of force by the state may violate the individual's rights and hence, the state is immoral. Against this claim, Nozick argues that the state will arise from anarchy even though no one intends this. Individuals in the state of nature would find it in their interest to allow a 'dominant protective agency' to emerge which would have de facto monopoly of force and could constitute a state like entity. The formation of such an entity, if done in an appropriate way, may violate no one's rights, i.e. if it does not go beyond its legitimate powers of protection, justice and defence. Justifying the minimal state, he categorically asserts that liberty must get absolute precedence over equality. He opposed the policies of progressive taxation and positive discrimination and asserts that realization of liberty should not be inhibited by the policies of the government in providing public health care, education or minimum standard of living. He argued that those who own wealth may voluntarily adopt some redistribution. He is against any redistribution of property by the state because it may transgress the liberty of those who have property. For Nozick, the state is no more than a night watchman, protecting the inviolable rights of the citizens. He asserts that the welfare notihn which advocates that it is the society which allocates resources is not only wrong, but illegitimate because there is no such thing as 'society' except in the minimal sense of being an aggregate of individuals. 'There are only individual people with their own individual lives' and society is no more than the sum of its individual components, State intervention means appropriation of both 'one's resources and one's self'. And 'seizing the results of someone's labour is equivalent to seizing hours fsom him and directing him to carry on various

activities. If people force you to do certain work or unrewarded work, for a certain period of time, they decide what you are to do and what purpose your work is to serve apart from your decisions. This process whereby they take this decision from you makes them a part –owner of you; it gives them a property right in you . Thus, the welfare state is a threat to liberty and independence of the individuals because individual is the sole owner of himself and hi:; talent.

Mow far is the non-interventionist, minimal and market dominated concept of libertarian state justified? Nozick's views are based on certain inalienable rights of the individual, possessed independent of society. However, a feature of the modern state is that it has recognized a range of individual rights which were not recognized by ancient Greek or medieval society, Rights are socially and historically constituted. In fact, the rights which Nozick defends are actually those rights which were historically specific to the market and were defined and constituted in the context of capitalist relations. They were neither natural nor prior to the state. Secondly, if the resource allocation is to be done by the market, it cannot be equal because in a capitalist society, the market also privileges some groups over others within the system of production and exchange. Hence, the idea of n free and sovereign individual choosing what to do with his resources is a myth. Noziclc's account of the minimum state fails because it contains no theory of taxation. For this reason, other libertarian scholars insist that taxation be according to general rules, uniformly applied. For example, Hayek and Friedman have argued that only a system of proportional taxation is fully consistent with the libertarian requirements. Proportional taxation would prevent the imposition of redistributive taxation on wealthy and unpopular minorities and would, thereby, remove a major area of arbitrariness from public policy. They advocate that the taxation policy be governed by general rules so that governments are prevented in their service activities from curbing economic freedom in subtle and covert ways.

In short, the concept of limited government propounded by the libertarians acknowledges the statc as a permanent necessary evil. in doing so, it exploits the insights of philosophers such as Adam Smith. As Hayek admits, there is a spontaneous order in social life, but qualifies that insight with the recognition that the spontaneous process of' society can only be beneficial against a background of legal institutions in which the basic liberties are guaranteed for all. The libertarian concept of the state eschews no less firmly the revisionary conception of government as the guardian and provider of general welfare, empowered to act on its own discretionary authority in the pursuit of the common good - a conception whose reality is everywhere that of a weak government, prey to collusive interest groups and incapable of' delivering even the security in enjoyment of basic liberties which is the state's only title to authority.

17.4 CRITICAL EVALUATION

Libertarianism has been criticized on many grounds such as its theory of rights, nature of' liberty, role of the state, political economy, problem of redistribution of resources etc. Let us have a look at these:

- Some libertarians argue that we are born with a set of rights – the rights to life, liberty and property - which must be respected. But the question is why these rights and not others'! The libertarians, answer is that they are essential to allow people to lead their own lives, that they reflect the imperative to treat people as ends in themselves and not merely

as a means to some ends and that they recognize the separateness of individuals. But this does not answer the question of why these rights are natural. According to Hammerton, there is no reason to believe that the rights are natural, pre-existing rights independent of the laws of a society.

'There is no doubt that treating individuals as ends in themselves is good. One can also agree that people can not plan ahead effectively if they cannot rely on being able to keep their possessions. However, one can also argue that providing people with tlie necessary resources for survival is also consistent with respect for others. If a person has no shelter, no job, no money, then one cannot plan effectively since one is subject to the decisions of others to the extent that one cannot cvcn be certain of survival. Hence, to give enough resources to lift oneself out of the predicament helps on both the counts: of treating one as an end and in enabling one to plan effectively. This can be done by taxing the rich which the libertarians do not like. But if you do not do this and let the poor go hungry, you are also violating the principle and claiming in effect that allowing people to keep every last penny of their money is more importantthan preventing someone from starving. The simple point is that in a libertarian society those without any property are unfree – they cannot act without other people helping them and allowing them to use their property – unless you view freedom as the freedom to act within your rights. However, since it is the rights themselves being discussed here, the libertarian cannot fall back on this view of freedom to defend those rights. In short, the libertarian view as to what are legitimate rights cannot be accepted.

- Critics also do not accept the libertarians' definition of freedom as 'absence of coercion'. If wc take this definition of freedom, then the amount of freedom a person has is the extent to which they act without being coerced to do (or not to do) something agains their will. In a libertarian society, one cannot (legitimately) do anything with another's property if they do not want you to, so your only guaranteed freedom is determined by the amount of property you have. This has the consequence that someone with no property has no guaranteed freedom, and that the more property you have, the greater is your guaranteed freedom. In other words, a distribution of property is a distribution of freedom, as the libertarians themselves define it. Thus, taking this definition of freedom and a belief in the free market together, the libertarians are saying that the best way of promoting freedom is to allow some people to have more of it than others, even when this may lead to some having very little freedom or even none. In other words, though the libertarians want everyone to have an equal sphere of guaranteed freedom, yet the market does not give everyone such a sphere and does not guarantee anyone any freedom at all. Again taking property from someone definitely restrict one's freedom in some way , but all societies restrict peoples' freedom in some way and libertarians themselves accept some restrictions on freedom – such as the restrictions of not violating other peoples' property rights. In fact, there is no harm in taxing the wealthy in order to prevent the poor from starving since the resulting restrictions of freedom on the wealthy can be very small indeed. In short, libertarians need a way of defining freedom in such a way as to dissect it from the distribution of property.

- Libertarians also define liberty as the 'absence of the initiation of force'. Again this definition also does not help much. Force can be initiated in order to protect property rights, and property rights can be violated without initiating force (i.e. copyright

violations). Libertarians who use this definition cannot claim, as they would like to, that they are always opposed to the initiation of force. This amounts to saying that you are allowed to act within your rights without anyone initiating force against you. However, this leads us back to the consequence of your property rights determining the extent of your guaranteed freedom. What determines freedom is what the legitimate rights of an individual are. Given the libertarian claim that the right to property is absolute, Freedom and properly become one and the same. Hammerton calls this 'Propertarianism'. Moreover, non-coercion is not the absolute good: other values override it. For instance, other things being equal, it is not wrong to secure justice by coercion. And when the alternative to coercion is non-innovation, then coercion to secure innovation is also legitimate. Libertarians say that they believe in political freedom. But even to simply enforce the principles of free market. the apparatus of a state would be necessary – an army to prevent invasion, a police force to suppress internal revolt and a judicial system. Most libertarians go much further; they want a libertarian regime, a political system. Some of them have written complete and detailed constitutions. But like any state, a libertarian state will have to enforce its constitution – or it will remain a proposed constitution. Even if the state is founded on Mars, someone else with different ideas will probably arrive sometime. The libertarian constitution might work in a freshly established libertarian colony, inhabited only by committed libertarians. But sooner or later, there will be an opposition perhaps resolutely hostile to the founding principles. States which fail to enforce their own political system against opposition will ultimately collapse or disappear. If libertarian states want to survive in such circumstances, they will use political repression against their internal opponents.

- Anti-statism is a central element of libertarianism, but it rests on no foundations other than the libertarian principles themselves. Often libertarians suggest that the state is inherently wrong. But even if they say it explicitly, it is simply their belief, that is all. By its nature, the state uses coercion of the type that libertarians oppose, but that is not inherently wrong either. In return, the state can end coercion of the type that libertarians tolerate and welcome, especially in the free market. And the state is almost by definition the only means to implement large scale change and innovation in society – as opposed to simply letting market forces shape the future. The fundamental task of the modern liberal democratic state is to innovate. To innovate in contravention ofnational tradition,to innovate when necessary in defiance of the 'will of the people' and to innovate in defiance of market forces and market logic. Apart from tlie protective functions, the state acts as the final arbiter ofdisputes with the highest authority to avoid endless arbitration processes. Many libertarians seek partial or total privation of the tasks being done by the government at present, but that is not the only issue. Paradoxically, to enforce such privatisation of' the state would require the exercise of state power by libertarians, and a functionally libertarian state.

- Critics of libertarianism also claim that tlic redistribution of wealth is not wrong. Libertarians argue as if it was self-evidently wrong to steal the legitimately owned property of the rich and give it to the poor. For example according to Nozick, the most important right is the sight over oneself – the right of self- ownership. It means that 'what one owns and what is owned are one and the same and tlie whole person'. That is, if I own myself, then I own my talents and also what proceeds from my talent. Hence, the demand for redistribution taxation from the talented to the disadvantaged violate self-ownership.

However, the egalitarians like Rawls believe that though a person is a legitimate possessor of his talent, still talent is a matter of brute luck. Hence, the right over talent does not include the right to accrue unequal rewards from the exercise of those talents. Those who are naturally disadvantaged have a claim on those with advantages. The talented only benefit from their talent if it also benefits the disadvantaged. Others believe that redistribution of wealth is inherently good; infact, it is a moral obligation of the state, Excessive wealth is ther'e to be redistributed; the only issue is what is excessive. And, of course, this may lead to coercion, but it is still not wrong, not wrong at all.

The libertarian view that the liberal welfare programmes by limiting property rights unduly limit peoples' self-determination is also not accepted by the egalitarians. Redistribution programmes do restrict the self-determination of the well-offs to a limited degree. But they also give real control over their lives to people who previously lacked. Liberal redistribution does not sacrifice self-determination for some other goal. Rather, it aims at a fair distribution of the means requireti for self-determination. The libertarian view allows undeserved inequalities in the distribution, which h a m those who need help in securing those conditions.

Malting a difference between the libertarian image and the libertarian reality, one critic has pointed out that: i) they believe in non-coercion and non -initiation of force, while in reality libertarians legitimise economic injustice by refusing to define it as coercion or initiated force, ii) they depend upon the moral autonomy of the individual, while in reality libertarians demand that the individual accept the outcome of the market forces, iii) it believes in political freedom, but some form of libertarian government imposing libertarian policies on non-libertarians would be necessary, iv) libertarians condemn existing states as oppressive, while at the same time they use the political process in the existing states to implement their policies, and v) they boast of the benefits of libertarianism , but they claim the right to decide for others what constitutes a 'benefit'.

As mentioned in the beginning, libertarianism is a part of the Anglo-American liberal tradition in political philosophy. Infact, it is a legitimation of the existing order, atleast in the United States. All political regimes have a legitimising ideology which give an ethical justification for the exercise of political power. It is not a revolutionary ideology in the sense of seeking to overthrow fundamental values of the society around it. In fact, most US libertarians have a traditionalist attitude towards American core values. Libertarianism legitimises primarily the free market and the resulting social inequalities. Libertarianism is a legitimation For the rich. Also, libertarians are conservative; they are not really interested in the free market or the non-coercion principle or limited government as such, but in their effects. Perhaps, what libertarians really want is to prevent innovation, to reverse social change, or in some way to return to the past.

17.5 SUMMARY

Libertarianism is a political philosophy which has appeared in the last 20-30 years in the United States. This is the political philosophy which has been at the heart of the so- called 'New Right' which influenced the Thatcher/Reagan administrations in the 1980s. Its important exponents are F.A. Hayek, Milton Friedman, Karl Popper, Talmon, I. Berlin, M. Rothbard, Robert Nozick etc. Its key concepts are as follows:

Individualism: Libertarianism sees the individual as the basic unit of social analysis. Only

individuals make choices and are responsible for their actions. It emphasises the dignity ofthc individual which entails both rights and responsibility.

Individual Rights: Because individuals are moral agents, they have a right to be secure in their life, liberty and property. Tliese rights are not granted by the government or by the society, they are inherent in the nature of human beings. It is intuitively right that individuals enjoy the security of such rights, the burden of explanation should lie with those who would take rights away.

Spontaneous Order: A great degree of order in society is necessary for individuals to survive and flourish. The great insight of libertarian social analysis is that order in society arises spontaneously, out of the action of thousands of individuals who coordinate their action with those of others, in order to achieve their purposes. The most important institutions of human society such as language, law, money and markets – all have developed spontaneously, without central direction. Civil society is another example of spontaneous order, the associations within the civil society are formed for a purpose, but civil society itself is not an organization and does not have a purpose of its own.

Free Markets: To survive and to flourish, individuals need to engage in economic activity, The right to property entails the right to exchange property by mutual agreements. Free markets are the economic system of free individuals and they are necessary to create wealth. Libertarians believe that people will be both free and more prosperous, if government intervention in peoples' economic choices is minimized.

Minimal state: to protect rights, individuals form governments. But government is a dangerous institution. Libertarians have a great antipathy to concentrated power. They want to divide and limit power and that means especially, to limit the government generally through a written constitution enumerating and limiting the power that tlie people delegate to government. Limited government is the basic political implication of libertarianism. The state should be limited to the narrow function of protection against force, theft, fraud, enforcement of contract etc. Any more extensive will violates a person's right not lo be forced to do certain things and as such would be unjustified.

Natural Harmony of Interests: Libertarians believe that there is a natural harmony of interests among peaceful productive people in a just society. One person's individual plans – which may involve getting a job, starting a business, buying a house etc – may conflict with the plans of others, so the market makes many of us change our plans. But we all prosper from the operation of the free market, and there are no necessary conflicts between farmers and merchants, manufacturers and importers. Only when a government begins to hand out rewards on the basis of political pressure, do we find ourselves involved in group conflicts; pushed to organize and contend with other groups for a piece of political power.

Peace: Libertarians have always battled the age-old scourge of war. They understood that war brought death and destruction on a grand scale, disrupted family and economic life and put more power in the hands of the ruling class – which might explain why the rulers did not always share the popular sentiment for peace. Freemen and women, of course have often had to defend their own societies against foreign threats, but throughout history, war has usually been the common enemy of peaceful productive people on all sides of the conflicts.

In short, libertarianism contains the standard framework of modern thought i.e. individualism, private property, capitalism, equality before law and minimal state. However, it applies these principles fully and consistently far more so than most modem thinkers and certainly more *so* than any modern government.

17.6 EXERCISES

1) Explain in your own words the meaning of libertarianism.

2) Write an essay on civil society.

3) Discuss individual rights in the context of liberty.

4) Critically examine the problem of redistribution.

UNIT 18 MARX, LENIN AND MAO

Structure

18.1 Introduction

18.2 Karl Marx (1818-1883)

- 18.2.1 Alienation
- 18.2.2 Historical Materialism
- 18.2.3 Class War
- 18.2.4 Surplus Value

18.3 V. I. Lenin (1870-1924)

- 18.3.1 Party as Vanguard of the Proletariat
- 18.3.2 Democratic Centralism
- 18.3.3 Imperialism
- 18.3.4 Weakest Link sf the Chain
- 18.3.5 Spontaneity Element gives way to Selectivity of Time and Place

18.4 Mao Tse-Tung (Now Mao Zedong) (1893-1976)

- 18.4.1 Peasant Revolution
- 18.4.2 Contradictions
- 18.4.3 On Practice
- 18.4.4 United Front and New Democracy

18.5 Summary

18.6 Exercises

18.1 INTRODUCTION

For over the last two hundred years, Liberalism has been the most dominant strand in political philosophy. In its earliest incarnation, which is now called classical or negative liberalism (as distinct from its later versions as welfare or positive liberalism and neo-liberalism) it stood, more than any thing else, for individual liberty. While as a political doctrine it was a defence of certain inalienable natural rights of the individual, in its economic dimension it stood for *laissez faire* or free-market economy. Because of these twin postulates of liberalism, it soon became the economic philosophy of capitalism aimed at protecting and promoting the interests of the bourgeoisie or the capitalist class. While on the one hand, it led to the concentration of capital in a few hands, on the other, it culminated in the alienation and exploitation of the proletariat (the working class). As a result of this negative fall out, liberalism became a target of attack from different quarters, The most virulent and systematic attack on classical liberalism and *laissez faire* economics came from Karl Marx, who went so far as to assert that the working class could be redeemed from its alienation and exploitation only by the revolutionary overthrow of the whole capitalist order. Because of the highly polemical nature of his political, social and economic philosophy, the marxian ideas soon acquired the character of a powerful, anti-liberal, political ideology which has popularly come to be known as socialism or communism. In fact, for about the last one hundred and fifty years, liberalism and marxism

have emerged as the two major contending ideologies each criticising, denigrating and attacking the other. In this whole process, the theory and practice of liberalism as well as marxism have undergone several changes. So much so that many of the original marxian formulations have been enriched, adapted arid even modified by the various post-Marx marxists. In this respect, the contributions of V. I. Lenin and Mao Tse Tung (now Mao Zedong) have been most seminal and noteworthy. This unit is aimed at familiarzing you with some of the most significant aspects of marxism, particularly with the ideas of Marx, Lenin and Mao.

These three have been the most prominent theoreticians of marxism, each of whom has, in his own unique way, dominated the minds of millions of men and have changed the face of the world during the twentieth century. While Marx laid the theoretical foundations of this change, Lenin and Mao successfully modeled their respective societies – the erstwhile Soviet Union and the People's Republic of China – by adapting the principles and postulates of marxist theory to the conditions prevailing in their countries. In the process of doing so, they have enriched the marxist theory and practice by adding various new dimensions and by offering diverse interpretations to the original marxian formulations. Let us briefly look at the contribution of each of them.

18.2 KARL MARX (1818-1883)

Born at Trier in Germany in 1818 (May 5) Marx studied law at the University of Bonn and later at the University of Berlin where lie got attracted to the young Hegelian movement which was highly critical not only of the Prussian Government, but also of Christianity. Because of his association with this anti-government movement, his career options in university or government were virtually closed. Therefore, he took to journalism and became the editor of *Rheinsche Zeitung* (1842). I-lere, he began writing radical articles on economic issues criticizing the government's economic policies. The Prussian rulers were annoyed at his views and ordered the closure of' his newspaper. Feeling suffocated in Germany, Marx migrated to France in 1843. During his stay at Paris, he came into contact with the French socialists and began to organise the migrant German workers. It was also at Paris that Marx wrote his first major work: *Economic and Philosophical Manuscripts* popularly known as *EPM* (which was written in 1844 but was first published in 1932). The central concern of this worlc is *alienation.* It was also during his stay at Paris that he met Friedrich Engels who became his life long friend and benefactor. However, because of his revolutionary ideas Marx was expelled from France as well in 1844 and (along with Engels) he moved to Belgium. During his stay in Belgium, spanning over three years, Marx got involved in a serious study of history which led him to propound his famous *theory of historical materialism* or *materialistic interpretation of history*. This theory is contained in the first joint work of Marx and Engels titled, *The German Ideology*. Like *EPM* even this work was not published during Marx's life time. Around this time, he joined the *Communist League*, which was an organisation of emigrant German workers. When the league held its conference at London in 1847, Marx and Engels were assigned the task of writing a *Communist Manifesto*. It was the publication of this work in 1848 which led to a wave of workers revolutions in Europe, more particularly in France. Marx's analysis of these revolutions is contained in two worlcs: *The Class Struggle in France and the Eighteenth Brumaire of Louis Bonaparte*. In 1848 Marx returned to France and from there to Germany where he again started the publication of his earlier newspaper, *Rheinsche Zeitung*. Like its earlier stance, the paper was highly critical of the Prussian Government and it was again closed down by the authorities. In 1849 (May) Marx moved to England and stayed at London till his death in 1883.

Marx's 34 years stay in England is marked by two changes in him. Firstly, he moved gradually but decisively from *Philosophy to Economics.* Unlike *alienation* which is the central theme of *EPM,* Marx now got engrossed in the analysis of the phenomenon of *exploitation* (see T.R. Sharma, "Karl Mars: From Alienation to Exploitation", *Indian Journal of Political Science,* Vol. *40* (No. 3) September, 1979, Pages 339 ff). He devoted his attention to serious economic questions like *wage labour, capitalism* and *surplus value*. Secondly, *he* was as much involved in writing serious treatises as in leading the workers' movements in Europe. He was not merely an arm-chair theoretician critical of capitalism, and its exploitative nature but also a revolutionary and an ideologue of communism. His most incisive work in this direction was a massive manuscript titled *"Grundrisse"* (Outline) which he wrote around 1857 but which came to light only in 1939. An abridged version of this work is contained in his *A Preface to Contribution to Critique of Political Economy.* His thesis about *labour theory of value, surplus value* and *laws of capital accumulation* are contained in his three volume magnum opus *Capital* whose first volume came out in 1867 and the remaining two volumes were published by Engels after Marx's death.

Marx's stay in London was also devoted to organising the British and French workers. In 1864 he (alongwith others) set up the first major organisation of workers of Europe which was named "International Working Men's Association (popularly known as Communist International). It remained active up to 1876 and its brightest hour was in 1871 when it succeeded in setting up tlie *Paris Commune.* The workers of Paris captured the city and ruled it for nearly two months. Marx's *Civil War in France* written in 1871 is an elaboration of the aims anti working of the Paris Commune. After 1870, Marx was mostly reacting to various political developments which were taking place in Europe. He was critical of those communists who were supporting state socialism of Lassale. This criticism is contained in his *Critique of the Gotha Programme* (1875).

18.2.1 Alienation

As pointed out above, *Marx* in his early years was attracted to Hegelian idealism, but under the influence of Feuerbach lie embraced communism of tlie humanist variety which he articulated in his *EPM.* He criticized capitalism because it leads to the alienation of labour. It is only in communism that human beings will be redeemed from this phenomenon. Alienation is a very complex concept. Sometimes. it is equated with such concepts as *estrangement, objectification* and *reification.* To put it in simple words, it implies *de-humanization* or *the loss of self.* The worker in a capitalist order works in a mechanical manner and does not derive any pleasure from his work. His labour becomes a commodity which he must sell in order to survive. Thus, lie gets alienated from his work. He is also alienated from *the* product of his labour, from his fellow workers and from the natural world. Marx argued that in a capitalist society, the worker is alienated from the product of his labour because it docs not belong to him but belongs to somebody else (the capitalist). The competitive nature of capitalism also alienates the worker from liis fellow workers. In essence, the worker is alienated from his creative potentialities that are characteristic of his species being. Marx advocated that it is only in a communist society that man will return to his real self as a free creative agent and the work will no more remain a monotonous activity. Private property is **the** product and the consequence of alienated labour and, therefore, its abolition will lead to redemption of man from his alienated state.

18.2.2 Historical Materialism

In the history of ideas there are three main explanations of how the human societies have developed over the ages – the *spiritualist* interpretation, the idealist interpretation and the *materialist* interpretation. According to the first, all developments in human history are due to divine dispensation or God's will. According to the second, it is the ideas that constitute the motor of human history. In other words, it is the developments of ideas that lead to corresponding developments in all the domains of human activity. The idealist interpretation is associated mainly with Hegel (a German thinker who preceded Marx). According to the third, which Marx expounded, all developments in human history are due to changes in the material conditions of life. In this unit, we are concerned only with the third, i.e., the materialist inrerpretation which *inverted* the Hegelian idealist interpretation. In the idealist interpretation it is the *mind* which is primary and *matter* secondary; while according to Marx's materialist interpretation, it is *matter which is primary* and the *mind secondary.* The doctrine of historical materialism constitutes the core of Marxian writings. It is the main theme of Marx's *German* Ideology. It seeks to explain all historical events in terms of changes occurring in tlie *mode of production*. The changes from *primitive communism* to slavery, from *slavery* to feudalism, from *feudalism* to capital ism and from *capitalism* to socialism and communism are all explained in terms of changes in the material conditions of society and in the lives of individuals. The mode of production consists of the *forces* or *means of production* (land, labour, capital, machine tools and factories, etc.) and *relations of productions*: slave-master, serf-baron, proletariat-capitalist. The economic structure of each society which is constituted by relations of production is the real *foundation* of that society. It constitutes the *base* on which rises the legal, political and ideological *super-structure* and to which correspond definite forms of social consciousness. This was quite the opposite of the Hegelian assertion that consciousness determines existence.

Marx's theory of historical materialism is also dialectical. Marx borrowed the *dialectical* method from Hegel who had described all the historical changes in terms of thesis, *anti-thesis and synthesis* in the domain of ideas. An idea (thesis), according to Hegel, gives rise to a counter-idea (anti-thesis) and finally their contradiction is resolved in a synthesis. This synthesis itself acquires the status of a thesis and gives rise to its anti-thesis which is again resolved in a synthesis, and the process goes on. It is important to note that whereas Hegel had applied the dialectical method in the domain of ideas, Marx applied the dialectical method in explaining the material world. As such, while the Hegelian position is characterised as *dialectical idealism*, that of Marx is known as *dialectical materialism.*

18.2.3 Class War

The mode of production or the way social production is organised in a society and the way instruments of production are used for such production determines social, political, legal and ideological character of society. At a certain stage, the forces of production out-grow (develop) beyond the relations of production and get out of tune with the existing relations of production which fetter (hinder) the former's growth. This *contradiction* (opposition) between the forces of production and relations of production leads to a *class war*, i.e., a war between the class which owns the means of production and the class which owns only labour power. Class war, according to Marx, has been the most prominent and recurring feature of all human societies. In the *Communist Manifesto*, Marx – Engels wrote, "the history of all hitherto existing society is the history of class struggles; freeman and slave, patrician and plebian, lord and serf, guild master and journey man, in a word, oppressor and oppressed...". When this class war reaches

a high water mark and contradictions become intense, it is resolved through a social revolution which ensures newer and higher relations of production corresponding to the forces or means of production. But in due course, the forces of production again outgrow the relations of production again necessitating a social *revolution.* This process goes on. A marked feature of a class-based society is that antagonism or contradiction arises due to divergent economic interests. In order to defend its class interest, the class owning the means of production establishes its class rule. "No antagonism, no progress" asserted Marx. You can see from the above argument that Marx's contention is that the state in a capitalist society is a vehicle of class rule. It follows from this argument that if classes are abolished and a class-less society comes about, then the state will become redundant and gradually it will wither away.

18.2.4 Surplus Value

Another important theory that Marx enunciated is the theory of surplus value. It is with the help of this concept that Marx explained the whole phenomenon of exploitation in the capitalist society. To put it in simple terms, surplus value is what is normally called *profit*. Marx's argument is that the worker produces social objects which are sold by the capitalist for more than what the worker receives as "wages". Thus, the worker is not paid for the whole of his labour (or labour power) that he spends in producing the social commodities. Some part of his labour is appropriated (or stolen) by the capitalist. The theory of surplus value is rooted in the *labour* thcorv *of value* i.e., that value of a commodity depends on the amount of labour spent in producing it. In other words, surplus value arises because some part of the worker's labour is not paid to him. Marx further argued that it is only in class based societies that surplus value exists because the bourgeois class exploits the proletariat. The bourgeoisie consists *of* those *who own the means of production* (land, capital and factories, etc.), while the proletariat consists of those who own nothing but their labour power which they must sell in order to survive. As the surplus value increases, the worker gets paid less and less. As pointed out above, this gives rise to a sharp contradiction between the bourgeoisie and the proletariat which is resolved finally in a proletarian revolution. This revolution will bring about the demise of capitalism. The state power will be captured by the proletariat. After the capture of state power by the working class, Marx visualized a brief period of *dictatorship of the proletariat.* It is during this dictatorship that the society would usher in *socialism (where each will work according to capacity und get according to work)* and finally, *communism* (where each will work according to *capacity* and get according to need Thus, communism is viewed by Marx as a class less society of associated producers.

Communism for Marx was a society which revolutionary dictatorship of the proletariat would bring about after capitalism is overthrown. It will also undertake positive *abolition of private* ***property*** and the abolition of private ownership. In a communist society, there will neither be exploitation nor alienation. Communism for Marx is the return of man to himself from his alienated condition. It is marked by abolition of classes in society. This can only be done by the proletariat by establishing its control over the means of production. Once the society becomes class-less, the state will no more be required. The capitalist state is a managing committee of the bourgeoisie because it facilitates the exploitation of one class by another. Therefore, in a classless society, the state will become redundant and it will wither away. Such conditions, according to Marx, existed in ancient times in the tribal societies.

18.3 V. I. LENIN (1870-1924)

Born at Simbirsk in 1870 (April 22) Lenin had normal schooling. However, when he was taking his final school examination at the age of 16 his elder brother (Alexander) was charged of conspiring to kill the Tsar (King in Russia was known as Tsar) and was sentenced to death by the Tsarist regime. Despite all the trauma that this event brought to Lenin, he secured the highest possible marks in the school examination. After school education, he joined the Kazan University. It was during his stay at the University that Lenin began taking part in the various student agitations which ultimately led to his expulsion from the University. Thereafter, he involved himself fully in revolutionary activities and soon became the leader of the Marxist group at St. Petersburg. He was arrested in 1895 by the Tsarist regime and exiled to Siberia. It was here that he wrote his first major work – *Development of Capitalism in Russia* (1899). In this work, he described how capitalism was growing in Russia during its initial phase. In 1900 he migrated to Geneva and joined Plakhanov's revolutionary group. He also started editing a paper named *Iskara* in which lie launched an anti-Tsarist campaign. In 1902, he wrote his second important work – *What is to be done* which deals with party organisation. In 1916 when the first world war had reached a very grim stage, Lenin produced his most incisive work *Imperialism, the Highest Stage of Capitalism* wherein he analysed the phenomenon of imperialism. In October 1917, he assumed power in Russia. By doing so, Lenin earned the credit for the first successful Marxist revolution and that too, in a capitalistically less developed country like Tsarist Russia where feudalism was deeply entrenched. Soon after the success of this revolution, Lenin started suffering from frequent strokes. His ill health forced him to gradually withdraw from the active governance of the Soviet Union. However, during the few years that lie lived after the success of his revolution, he laid the foundation of a socialist state which his successor, Joseph Stalin, developed into a super power in a short span of time.

18.3.1 Party as Vanguard of the Proletariat

'There are several seminal contributions of Lenin to Marxist theory and practice. In his *Development of Capitalism* in *Russia,* he tried to offer an interpretation of Tsarist Russia in Marxist terms. He argued that there was a large wage-labour class in Russia. However, he expressed the view that this wage labour class was not fully conscious of its exploitation. He further added that only the industrial proletariat (factory workers) was capable of articulating the grievances of this whole class in the revolutionary direction. This could be done only by transcending local economic grievances and narrow trade unionism. For this, there was a need of a national level political organisation. Only such an organisation could raise the level of political consciousness of the worlters by transforming the wage labour class into a revolutionary proletariat class capable of staging a successful revolution. Lenin indeed tried to do so in actual practice, The biggest task for him was to create a working class in Russia which was conscious of its exploitation. This in his view needed a communist organisation, but he realized that the autocratic Tsarist regime would not allow any such organisation to operate openly. The only alternative was to operate underground in a clandestine manner. In short, the problem for Lenin was how to do these twin tasks: (i) creating a national level organisation of Russian wage workers and (ii) raising their level of political consciousness. The Leninist strategy on these two issues is contained in his *What is to be Done*. In this work, Lenin argued that in conditions prevailing in Russia there was need of a Communist Party which could act as a *Vanguard of the Proletariat.* (Stalin further elaborated this idea when he argued that a working class without a Communist Party was like an army without the General

staff). Lenin did not only emphasise the need of such a Communist Party in Russia, he also added that this vanguard party should consist of or at least be led by *whole time professional revolutionaries*. Only then a successful revolution could be brought about. You must have noticed that by making this argument Lenin departed from the original Marxian position. In fact, the task which Marx had assigned to the proletariat class in staging a successful revolution got transferred to the Communist Party as the vanguard of this class. Lenin's vanguard thesis was criticized by several of his contemporaries, particularly by a Polish Marxist Rosa Luxembourg. She argued that this would place the working class in tutelage of the party. She also pointed out that due to Lenin's vanguard thesis, the worlters would lose all their initiative and become mere tools in the hands of the party. While she did not altogether deny the need of a well organised party and the role of able leadership in its functioning, she asserted that it would kill or at least blunt the self-emancipatory efforts of the working class.

18.3.2 Democratic Centralism

Having made the Communist Party as the vanguard of the proletariat, Lenin advocated a certain type of organizational structure for the party. His thesis is popularly known as 'democratic centralism'. To put it in simple words, democratic centralism consisted of two elements: democracy and centralism. It meant that the hierarchical structure of the Communist party should be such that each higher organ of the party should be elected by the lower organ and all the party matters should initially discuss freely at all the levels of the organisation, from the lowest to the highest. However, once a decision has been taken by the highest organ it should be imposed strictly on all the lower organs and all of them must abide by it. While theoretically democratic centralism has democracy as well as centralism, in actual practice the party became less and less democratic and more and more centralized. Like his vanguard thesis, Lenin's views on democratic centralism were also criticized by several of his contemporaries.

18.3.3 Imperialism

Marx in his analysis of capitalism had argued that in the task of over-throwing autocracy and feudalism, the bourgeoisie plays a revolutionary role and brings about democracy and capitalism. This is called the 'bourgeois democratic revolution'. It puts the bourgeoisie into power. Under the rule of the bourgeoisie. capitalism would develop further. Finally, it would reach a stage where the class contradiction between the bourgeoisie and the proletariat would become very sharp. This would create conditions for a *proletarian socialist revolution* which would mark the demise of capitalism. This prediction of Marx, however, did not prove true and the development of capitalism in Europe did not lead to proletarian socialist revolutions. Lenin tried to explain why the Marxian prediction about the proletarian socialist revolutions and demise of capitalism had not come true. Mow had capitalism received a lease of life. Mow had capitalism failed in its historic mission? Lenin in his *Imperialism:* The *Highest Stage of Capitalism* tried to explain this lease of life which capitalisin in tlie west had received. Capitalism, in his view, had grown so much that raw material and domestic markets in the capitalist countries were not enough to permit its further growth. Therefore, it had become necessary for these countries to find raw material and new markets for investment in Asia, Africa and South America. Thus, capitalism was exported from Europe. It had acquired a monopolistic position and had become reactionary. Due to colonization of Asia, Africa and South America, capitalism had acquired a *parasitic* position. Thus, capitalism had reached its highest stage (imperialism) and had exhausted the historical mission of creating conditions

for a proletarian revolution in different capitalist countries. However, capitalism in its imperialist manifestation had created conditions for a socialist revolution at the global stage.

18.3.4 Weakest link of the Chain

The success of the Bolshevik Revolution in a capitalistically under-developed country like Russia in 1917 raised two new problems for Lenin. The first problem was to reconcile and interpret this revolution in Marxian terms. Lenin did so by inventing 'the weakest link of the chain' argument. It meant that Tsarist Russia where capitalism was not yet fully developed constituted the weakest link of the imperialist chain and strategically it is quite appropriate to break the chain at its weakest rather than at its strongest point. In fact, this whole idea is also implicit in Marx. Marx had argued that with tlie development of capitalism, the bourgeoisie becomes stronger and stronger. But it also gives rise to its equally powerful gravediggers i.e., the proletariat class. The bourgeoisie cannot grow strong without leading to simultaneous growth of the proletariat. So in societies where the bourgeoisie is strong, the proletariat is also strong. Similarly, where the bourgeoisie is weak, the proletariat is also weak. The Leninist argument was that the capitalistically advanced countries of Europe constituted the strongest point of the imperialist chain; while Tsarist Russia constituted the weakest link.

The second problem for Lenin was more serious. Since the revolution had occurred in Tsarist Russia where capitalism was still unripe, the problem was to draw a plan for building a socialist state. The problem got further compounded because Marx in his writings had given a very sketchy picture of the socialist stage and had not explained in detail how a socialist society would come about. The Capitalist State, according to Lenin, emerged as an organ of class rule. It was a special organisation of force and violence for the exploitation of the working class. This capitalist state had to be replaced by a socialist state. In his *State and Revolution,* Lenin offered some outlines of his strategy to built such a socialist state in Russia. He argued that the bureaucratic military state was to be replaced by soviets modelled on the lines of the Paris Commune. Moreover, he did not subscribe fully to the Marxist notion of withering away of the state. Instead, he began to argue that during the transitional phase, the communists could use the state apparatus to achieve their political and economic goals. It meant that it may be necessary to five with a mixed economy for sometime (private and public sectors could co-exist) till the public sector is strong enough to take over the task of socialist reconstruction. Only then the possibility of withering away of the state would be there.

18.3.5 Spontaneity Element gives way to Selectivity of Time and Place

As pointed out earlier, Lenin assigned the task of staging a successful proletarian revolution to the communist party as the vanguard of the proletariat. This amounted to some deviation from the Marxian position. Marx had expressed considerable Faith in the revolutionary potential of the working class. But in Lenin's argument, the spontaneity element inherent in Marx gave way to selectivity of time and place. Lenin was critical of the view expressed by the Mensheviks (minority faction in the party) that revolutionaries should wait for the development of spontaneous revolutionary action of the masses. He argued that without strong leadership from outside its ranks, the working class could never rise beyond trade unionism. I-le considered such trade unionism reformist rather than revolutionary. It amounted to saying that the leadership of the Communist Party would decide where and when the revolution is to be attempted. In other words, the agenda of revolution would be decided by the party and not by the workers. This view of Lenin was criticised by some of his contemporaries, particularly

Rosa Luxemberg. She argued that since the decision about time, place and strategy of the revolution was to be decided by the Communist Party, the spontaneity element of a revolution which is inherent in Marx would give way to selectivity of time and place. This, she further added, would blunt the self-emancipatory efforts of the working class.

18.4 MAO TSE-TUNG (NOW MAO ZEDONG) (1893-1976)

Born at Shaoshan in Hunan province of China in 1893 (December 26) Mao is the second Marxist revolutionary (Lenin being the first) who brought about a successful revolution in a backward country like China. Moreover, he did so primarily with the help of the peasantry – a class which, Marx thought, had no revolutionary potential. Even Lenin had not placed much faith in the peasant class. Mao, like Lenin, was both a practitioner of Marxism a:, also its theoretician. After a little formal education, he joined the army of Hunan province during the 1911 revolution led by Kuomintang (KMT), a bourgeois nationalist party of Sun Yat Sen. Soon after the success of the KMT revolution, he moved to Changsha (Capital of Hunan) **and** later to Peking (Now Beijing). It was here that he came under the influence of the radical Marxist leader Li Dazhao who arranged a job for him in the university library. However, he left the job and returned to Changsha and became active in the Communist Party of China (CPC). Between 1921-25, he organized the mine workers. Hc also travelled to various parts of China which gave him a first hand impression about the exploitative conditions under which the Chinese peasantry was reeling at that time. This was a period of cooperation between the KMT and the CPC. However, tension betwcen the two began to develop when the CPC, pressed for agrarian reforms which were not acceptable to the KMT, because they were bound to adversely affect the interest of the KMT members many of whom were landlords. B y 1927, the relations between the KMT and the CPC became so bitter that the KMT decided to hit at the communists. After this break between the KMT and the CPC, Mao was asked to organise a rebellion of Hunan peasants. During the course of this rebellion, Mao wrote his first major work – *Analysis of Classes* in *the Chinese* ***Society.*** Here, he identified the various strata of Chinese peasantry– small, marginal, middle and the big peasant and the revolutionary potential of each of them. Hc highlighted the contradiction between the peasantry and the feudal lords. He argued that in the Chinese conditions, the peasantry was going to be the vanguard of the revolution, unlike Tsarist Russia where revolution was led by the proletariat. He also identified tlie strata which could be *reliable* and *vacillating* allies in a peasant led revolution. He attempted the *Harvest Uprising* of peasants in 1928, but the uprising was crushed and Mao had to flee alongwith his supporters to Chingkangshan (now Jingangshan) mountains. From these mountains, Mao's party started its guerrilla warfare tactics, By this, Mao became the originator of guerrilla warfare within the marxian revolutionary framework. By these tactics, the CPC was able to capture various parts of South-cast China. It set up a number of peasant Soviets in the captured areas. These successes of the CPC in rural China, however, were not according to the policy laid down by the Communist International, which had been advocating that the revolution must begin from the urban centres. The urban ccntercd revolution, Mao **thought,** was bound to fail in China because there was a very small proletariat. Therefore, he continued his guerrilla warfare tactics in the rural areas. The KMT tried to crush these guerrilla attacks and encircled the areas where peasant Soviets had been set up.

Finally, the KMT armies drove out the revolutionaries who took shelter in the north-west hills of China, This escape became famous as Mao's *Long March.* This ***also*** made Man the undisputed leader of the CPC, a position which he maintained till his death. Mao's stay in the

north-west (Yanan Province) was the most fruitful period for the CPC. It was here that Mao began an extensive study of Marxist philosophy. Mao is believed to have written two serious pieces during this period; one titled "On *Practice"* and the other called "On Contradiction", both of which were published after the success of the Chinese revolution. In the 1940s, he gave a blue-print of the future Chinese Government titled "*New* Democracy" (1945). During 1942-43, Mao consolidated his position in the CPC by eliminating all his possible potential rivals through a *rectification campaign.* He also advocated a strategy of mass mobilization of peasants which is known as *Mao's Mass-line*. Here, he took a highly nationalist posture against the Japanese invasion and tried to organise the Chinese people around the national sentiment. He also refined his theory and practice of guerrilla warfare. The threat to Chinese security during the second world war again brought the KMT and the CPC together. When the cooperation between the two finally ended in 1949, Mao became the head of the Chinese state which began to be called the People's Republic of China (PRC). During the course of reconstruction of the Chinese society, Mao gave a model different from the one envisaged by Marx in his writings or the one attempted by Lenin in the Soviet Union. In the early 1950s, Mao gave his famous call of *"Let* Hundred *Flowers* Bloom" which allowed different view-points in the CPC to be expressed freely and openly. Later, he attempted collectivization of agriculture followed by a call for a *Great Leap* Forwnrd to bring about quick transition to communism in China. These attempts of Mao did not fully succeed, which generated some resentment and even opposition to Mao's management of the economic agenda. Mao tried to fight this opposition on an ideological plank and gave a call for a Cultural *Revolution* in 1966. This was an attempt at re-charging the revolutionary zeal of the CPC cadres. He reinained wedded to this idea till his death in 1976 (September 9).

18.4.1 Peasant Revolution

While the Marxist Leninist legacy greatly influenced him, Mao is a great innovator in his own right. He modified Marxism Leninism by relying heavily on the peasantry's revolutionary potential. It needs to be reinembered that Marx has treated the peasantry with some degree of contempt. For the most part, peasantry for him was conservative and reactionary; it was no more than a bag of potatoes unable to make a revolution. Even Lenin had relied mainly on the proletariat in the urban centres of Russia for mass insurrections and had not placed much faith in the peasantry's revolutionary potential. Mao's *fundamental* contribution, therefore, was to bring about a successful revolution in China mainly with the help of the peasantry. More than anything else, his revolutionary model became relevant for several Afro-Asian peasant societies. Secondly, Mao in his cultural revolution phase drew some lessons from the course of post-revolutionary reconstruction in the Soviet Union and warned (like Milovan Djilas) against the emergence of the new bourgeois class who were beneficiaries of the transitional period. In other words, Mao was aware that the party's top hierarchy could itself become a new class. Mao used this argument to side-line his rivals in the top echelons of the CPC.

18.4.2 Contradictions

In Marxist theory, the main vehicle of all changes in society is contradiction. Mao further elaborated this idea. For him, contradictions or the unity of opposites (thesis and anti-thesis) leading to a higher level and transforming quantity into quality (synthesis) was the fundamental law of historical development. But he did not fully endorse the Marxist position on contradiction. it may be mentioned that Marx, in his writings, seems to have used the terms contradictions and antagonisms almost interchangeably. I-Iowever, Lenin began to distinguish

between the two. He expressed the view that contradictions would remain even in a socialist society, but antagonisms would not. Mao immensely enriched the debate. In his famous essay titled "On Contradictions (1937), he formulated the notions of *antagonistic contradictions* and *non-antagonistic contradictions*. According to him, antagonistic contradictions are those which can be resolved peacefully. In his 'On Correct Handling of Contradictions' (1957) Mao further elaborated this view. He argued that the contradictions between the peasantry and the proletariat were non-antagonistic; the contradictions between the peasantry and the proletariat on one hand, and the petty bourgeoisie on the other were non-antagonistic; the contradictions between the peasantry, the proletariat and the petty bourgeoisie on the one hand and the national bourgeoisie on the other were non-antagonistic. Contradictions between the various communist parties were non-antagonistic, but contradictions between the Chinese people and the compradore bourgeoisie were antagonistic. Contradictions between the socialist and the capitalist camp were antagonistic. Contradictions between colonial countries and imperialism were antagonistic. He also argued that at any one point of time, one contradiction becomes the *principal contradiction* whereas the other contradictions become minor. Further, he argued that even a principal contradiction has a principal aspect and several minor aspects. For example, in the era of imperialism the contradiction between the imperialist camp on one hand and the socialist camp and colonial countries on the other, is a principal contradiction and contradiction between the Soviet Union and the US was a principal aspect of this principal contradiction. However, he also added that which contradiction is to be treated as antagonistic and principal and which as minor and non-antagonistic or which aspect is to be treated as principal would be contingent on relative historical tactical considerations.

18.4.3 On Practice

This elaboration of contradictions led Mao to expound his epistemology or theory of knowledge. In his famous essay titled, On *Practice* (1973) Mao argued that all knowledge of the real world comes to us through concrete investigation and empirical analysis. I-le was opposed lo mere book learning or intuitive theorising. For example, if one wanted to understand the Chinese society, then one must understand its class structure, its pattern of land ownership and the impact of imperialism on the local economy of China. Theory without continuous reference to empirical reality would become a mere dogma. I-lowever, he visualized two stages in the understanding of empirical reality: The *Perceptual stage*, and *The Conceptual Stage*. At the perceptual stage, we only get the impression of reality through our senses. This sense perception has to be compounded into conceptual knowledge. For example, when one looks at tlie empirical reality of rural China, it is only the perceptual stage of knowledge. But having seen this reality, one has to understand it in terms of different stratas of peasantry: landless, marginal, small, middle and big farmers etc., that is the conceptual stage.

18.4.4 United Front and New Democracy

Mao realized that the peasantry in China was not strong enough ta win the revolutionary struggle against imperialism and feudalism. Therefore, it was necessary to seek the help of the other classes of Chinese society. It was in this context that Mao emphasized the concept of a United Front. It was seen as an alliance between different partners who had some common interest like opposition to imperialism. The nature of such a United Front would depend on the historical situation. Its object would be to pursue tlie resolution of the principal contradiction. Such a United Front strategy was employed by Mao by establishing the alliance of Chinese *peasantry* with the *proletariat, the petty bourgeoisie* and even the *national bourgeoisie*. It

also intended the non-party elements among the Chinese intellectuals. The United front had to be a broad alliance of the Chinese people against Japanese imperialism and western powers.

In pursuance of his United Front strategy, Mao gave a call in 1940 for a new democratic republic of China. It was to be a state under the joint dictatorship of several classes. In 1945, lie proposed a state system which is called New *Democracy*. While the united front consisted of an overwhelming majority of the Chinese people, the leading position in the alliance had to be in the hands of the working class. It meant that the petty bourgeoisie and the national bourgeoisie would not only be partners in the United Front, they would also be partners of the ruling alliance, but they had to be only junior partners. He called such a state as the 'People's Democratic Dictatorship'. It was a combination of two aspects – *democracy* for the people and dictatorship over the 'enemies of the people' or the 'running dogs of imperialism'. In concrete terms, it meant that the Chinese democratic state would incorporate the peasantry, the working class, the petty bourgeoisie and the national bourgeoisie in the ruling alliance. In doing so Mao deviated from the classical Marxist notion of the dictatorship of the proletariat. In fact, he combined Marxism and nationalism.

18.5 SUMMARY

In this unit, we have discussed the founder and two prominent advocates of Marxism: Marx, Lenin and Mao. We have discussed Marx's theory ofalienation, historical materialism, surplus., value, clnss war and revolution. Broadly, Marx's views on the state, dictatorship of the proletariat and the socialist society are also mentioned. This is followed by a discussion of Lenin's ideas on party organisation and democratic centralism, his theory of imperialism and his views on the nature of the post-revolutionary state. Lenin's views about selectivity of place and time of revolution as against the Marxist view about spontaneity are also discussed. Finally, Mao's views about classes in the Chinese society, his notion of peasant revolution, his views on contradictions and new democracy are discussed. Maoist notion of antagonistic and non-antagonistic contradictions is an important contribution ta the Marxist theory. In addition to it, his advocacy of 'let hundred flowers bloom' and 'great leap forward' is also discussed.

18.6 EXERCISES

1) What is the main intellectual contribution of 'early' Marx? How does 'early' Marx differ from 'later' Marx?

2) What is materialistic inter pretation of history?

3) What is Lenin's theory of Party Organisation?

4) What is Lenin's analysis of imperialism?

5) Describe Mao's anatysis of classes in the Chinese society.

6) What has been Mao's contribution to the theory of contradictions?

8) Comment on Mao's notion of New Democracy.

UNIT 19 LUKACS, GRAMSCI AND THE FRANKFURT SCHOOL

Structure

19.1 Introduction

19.2 Georg Lukacs (1885-1971)

- 19.2.1 Rejection of Dialectical Materialism
- 19.2.2 Denial of Lenin's Vanguard Thesis
- 19.2.3 Relation of Subject and Object

19.3 Antonio Gramsci (1891-1937)

- 19.3.1 Notion of Hegemony
- 19.3.2 Role of Intellectuals
- 19.3.3 Philosophy of Praxis
- 19.3.4 Relation between the Base and the Super-Structure and the Notion of Historic Bloc

19.4 Frankfurt School (Or Critical Theory)

- 19.4.1 Opposition to all Forms of Domination
- 19.4.2 Critique of Orthodox Marxism
- 19.4.3 In Search of Emancipation

19.5 Summary

19.6 Exercises

19.1 INTRODUCTION

In the previous unit, we have discussed the main ideas of the three prominent advocates of Marxism: Marx, Lenin and Mao. As indicated earlier, all the three have contributed not only to the Marxist *theory,* but have also made significant contribution to revolutionary practice. This is particularly true of Lenin and Mao. In this unit, we propose to discuss another three major streams which have enriched Marxist theory. These are associated with Lukacs (a Hungarian), Gramsci (an Italian) and the Frankfurt School (Germany). It is important for you to remember that their contribution is more to theory than to revolutionarypractice. It is also useful to bear in mind that besides these three, there are several others like Trotsky, Plekhanov, Stajanovic, Althusser, Kolakowski and Poulantazas etc. who have also contributed to the theory of Marxism. Similarly, many others including Che Geuvara, Regis Debray, Frantz Fanon etc. have contributed a great deal both to the Marxist theory as well as to revolutionary practice. However, in this unit the discussion will be limited only to Lukacs, Grarnsci and the Frankfurt School.

19.2 GEORG LUKACS (1885-1971)

Georg Lukacs was born at Budapest (Hungary) in 1885 (April 13). After graduating from Budapest University, he studied at the universities of Berlin and **Heidelberg.** He had **diverse** interests, During the first phase of his life, even while he was studying he devoted considerable

time to literary criticism. In this field, his early works are *Soul and Form* (1910), *History of Development of Modern Drama* (1911), *Aesthetic Culture* (1913) and *the Theory of Novel* (1916). His initial inclination during this period was towards ethical idealism. Plato and Hegel seem to have considerably influenced him in this respect. Gradually, he was attracted by Marxian philosophy and within a couple of years he got intensely involved in the communist movement of his country. He joined the Communist Party of Hungary and became the Education Minister in 1919 in the short-lived Communist Government. After the fall of the communist regime, he was tried by the new Hungarian Government and sentenced to death. He fled from Hungary and spent nearly 20 years in Austria, Germany and the Soviet Union. It was during his stay in Austria that he wrote his most seminal work – *History and Class Consciousness.* This is the most important work of Lukacs and it has influenced a large number of Marxists. In fact, the Student Movement in France and in other countries of Europe in the 1960s is said to have been inspired by this work. The Frankfurt School was also influenced by him. He returned to I-Iungary in 1945 to become a professor of Aesthetics at the Budapest University. Here, he got actively involved in political activities and consequently, became a target of serious criticism. In 1956, in the wake of de-Stalinization, he became the Minister of Culture in the Communist Government of Imray Nagi in Hungary for a few months. After the fall of this government, he was deported to Romania but he returned in 1957. Thereafter, till his death in 1971 (June 4) lie was engaged in writing philosophical and literary works.

19.2.1 Rejection of Dialectical Materialism

You would recall that Marx had predicted that when contradictions in capitalism would grow, it would be overthrown in a revolution by the proletariat. However, it was noticed during the twentieth century that this prediction of Marx did not come true and capitalism continued to grow despite its periodic crises. It was a problem for all post-Marx Marxists to explain as to why capitalism was not coming to an end. In the previous lesson, we discussed that Lenin's explanation was that capitalism was still surviving because it had reached its highest stage of *imperialism* which was the last stage of capitalism. Lukacs, Gramsci and the Frankfurt School offered other answers to explain this phenomenon. Lukacs argued that for the overthrow of capitalism, the mere *existence* of the proletariat class was not enough as Marx had argued; this proletariat must also acquire revolutionary consciousness. He was critical of the view that Marxism was like physical sciences. He criticized Engel's argument that human behaviour was governed by dialectical laws. He also criticized Engels for applying dialectics to the social world, because the interaction of subject and object in the social world is not the same as in the natural world. He went on to say that thought does not merely mirror or reflect the physical world sans mental activity. He rejected the Marxian theory of dialectical materialism. Likewise, Gramsci questioned the very Marxian view that the economic base determines the ideological political superstructure. He tried to explain how one class maintains its hold on the other. He argued that the rule of one class over the other does not depend merely on the economic and physical power, it depends on the ability of the ruling class to impose its social, cultural and moral *values* on the ruled. Thus, while Lukacs emphasized the role of consciousness instead of material forces, Gramsci highlighted the role of cultural aspects instead of the economic base determining the super structure.

Lukacs carried out a philosophic revisionism of Marxism. He questioned several key aspects of Marxism, Leninism. He attacked historical materialism which is the very basis of Marxism. He argued that it was vulgar Marxism to say that a set of economic laws will determine whether the situation was ripe for revolution or not. He asserted that material conditions in

themselves cannot change history. Socialist revolution is not a consequence of sharpening of just contradictions of capitalism. It is only when a class becomes conscious of these contradictions that revolutionary change occurs, Thus, he emphasized the creative role of human consciousness. In the previous unit, it was pointed out that according to Marx, it is the sharpening of contradictions between the forces or means of production and relations of production that leads to changes in society; Lukacs reversed this argument. He asserted that contradictions between means and relations of production (which is a objective fact) cannot itself bring about any change in society, unless there is a human subject (proletariat class) which grasps this contradiction. To put it in other words, Lulcacs ***did not*** accept the basic Marxian position that *matter isprimary* and *mind secondary*. Mere fact that there is exploitation and alienation of the proletariat class is not enough to bring about a revolution; rather it is only when the proletariat class becomes conscious of this alienation and exploitation that revolution would talce place. Thus, Lukacs took a *semi-Hegelian* or quasi Hegelian position. It almost amounted to saying that *mind is primary* and *matter secondary*. In fact, Lukacs seems to agree with the Marxian thesis of Feuerbach that the essential element in historical evolution is not contradiction, but proletariat's awareness about this contradiction which it acquires when engaged in resolving it. Further, the proletariat's consciousness about this contradiction is not direct, but only through its having experienced alienation. Lukacs, argument is that in the social world (unlike the natural world) there are no objective historical laws which are not subject to human control.

19.2.2 Denial of Lenin's Vanguard Thesis

The above position of Lukacs also amounts to a *denial* of Lenin's thesis about the role of the Comnzunist Party as the vanguard of the proletariat, because he maintains that such revolutionary consciousness will not come to the proletariat through some internzediary, but directly by experiencing alienation and exploitation. Consciousness in this way does not remain a super-structural category as in Marx. In Lenin's position as stated in *What is to be Done* (1902), the proletariat can acquire revolutionary consciousness (awareness about the need to overthrow capitalism) only by relying on outside elements (professional revolutionaries) who have a clear awareness of historical evolution which the proletariat cannot have on its own. The Communist Party, in Lenin's argument, represents a suitable mechanism for imparting such revolutionary consciousness to the proletariat; but for Lukacs the proletariat must acquire this consciousness about its class position without any outside help. To a question as to how the proletariat will acquire such revolutionary consciousness, Lukacs' response was that it would come through Workers' Councils and not by the party organisation as Lenin had maintained.

19.2.3 Relation of Subject and Object

In classical materialism, consciousness is considered a mere reflection of reality and the only valid category is totality which can be grasped by the dialectical method alone. Lukacs calls it the "reflective" or copy theory of knowledge which apprehends a false objectivity. This is a very complex argument of Lukacs. He is saying that to stop at the reality of a mere object is to grasp only at the *appearance* of things. According to him, the revolutionary *praxis* of the proletariat enables it to have a new and higher form of consciousness. When the proletariat begins to see that in capitalism, it has become a mere commodity or a mere objecr, it ceases to be a mere commodity and a mere *object*. It becomes *a subject* (agent of change). Thus, comprehension of this reality enables it to change this reality. Lukacs further argued that

object and subject (being and *consciousness*) are not related to each other as *base* and *super-structure,* but co-exist in a single dialectic. In other words, while Marx had argued that it is the material conditions of society which change history, according to Lukacs consciousness is not a simple reflection of the process of history, but it truly is an agent by which history may be transformed. While consciousness is a *product* of material conditions, it is also tlie driving *force* by which material conditions may be changed. While the orthodox Marxian position states that the proletariat's conditions of existence determines their *consciousness*, Lukacs maintains that the proletariat's consciousness would change their conditions of existence. Thus, consciousness is the most decisive factor in the self-liberation of the proletariat. It is through tlie acquisition of revolutionary consciousness that the proletariat transforms itself from a '*class in itself*' to a 'class for itself', from an object of history to a subject of history.

19.3 ANTONIO GRAMSCI (1891-1937)

Gramsci was born in a poor family in Sardina which was the poorest region of Italy. His father was arrested for embezzlement when Gramsci was a small child and sentenced to five years imprisonment. In his absence, the family lived in utter poverty because of which Gramsci suffered physical deformity and became a hunchback. After some elementary education, Gramsci started working in an office. In 1911 he won a scholarship and joined Turin University. At Turin, he noticed that there was a lot of difference in the standard of living in the rural areas of Italy and its cities. While at the university, he got associated with the Italian Socialist Party. By and by he was attracted to Marxist ideas. He was also influenced by Corce's emphasis on the role of *culture* and *thought* in the development of history. It was this idea of Corce which provided the historical framework within which Gramsci carried out his adapiation of Marxian ideas. In 1914-15 he attended a series of lectures on Marx which made him particularly interested in the problem of relation between the *base* and the *super-structure*. He began to engage himself in the workers' movement. When the Italian Communist Party was founded in 1921, Gramsci became one of its founding member. Soon, he became its General Secretary and was also elected to the Italian Parliament. He was arrested in 1926 in the wake of the rise of fascism and remained imprisoned till his death. During his prison life he wrote on several topics. These writings were published later as *Prison* Notebooks. It is these Notebooks of Gramsci which made him a great theoretician of Hegelian Marxisrn (alongwith Lukacs). His other major work is Modern Prince and other writings.

19.3.1 Notion sf Hegemony

Gramsci's *Prison Notebooks* and *Modern* Prince *and Other Writings* deal with diverse issues of politics, history, culture and philosophy, but in this unit we will refer to only some of them: his notion of *hegemony*, his views about the role *of intellectuals*, his *philosophy of Praxis* and his analysis of relations between the ***base*** and the *super-structure*. Out of ail these, his notion of hegemony is considered to be the most significant and original contribution of Gramsci. In the previous unit, it was pointed out that in all societies there are two classes: the class which owns the means of production and the class which owns only labour power. The class which owns the means of production establishes its rule over the class which owns labour power and exploits it. Thus, in the Marxian scheme, the capitalist state is the managing committee of the bourgeoisie, which facilitates and legitimizes the exploitative processes in the society. It is the economic power (or the ownership of means of production) that enables the ruling class to remain in power. Gramsci contested this Marxian position. He argued that the ruling class maintains its domination in diverse ways including the use *of force*, use of its *economic power*

and the *consent* of the ruled. in other words, the bourgeois class maintains its domination not merely by force, but in several *nun-coercive* ways. Two such non-coercive ways prominently come out in his writings. One of them is the ability of the ruling class to impose its own values and belief systems on the masses. Gramsci argued that the ruling class uses various processes of socialization to impose its own culture on the ruled. The ruling class attempts to control the minds of **men** by imposing its own culture on them in several subtle ways. So, *cultural hegemony* of the ruling class is the basis of its ruling power. Secondly, he argues that the ruling class does not always work for its narrow class interest. In order to maintain its ruling position, it enters into compromises and alliances with other groups in societies and creates a historic bloc. It is this strategy of creating a social bloc which enables the ruling class *to* get the consent of the ruled. You will notice that this argument of Gramsci is completely at variance with the orthodox Marxian position in which the class rule of the bourgeois is justified on the basis of its control of means of production. In other words, in the Gramscian argument the role of *ideas* and *culture* become central instead of the economic factor. Secondly, Gramsci's explanation of dominance of the ruling class in terms of its compromises and alliances with other allies underplays the orthodox Marxian position in which the state is viewed merely as the managing committee of the bourgeoisie. So much so that Grarnsci also suggested a system of alliances for the working class to enable it to overthrow the bourgeois rule. He emphasized the need for creating a *historic* bloc.

19.3.2 Role sf Intellectuals

Here a question arises as to how does the ruling class establish its hegemony in society? Gramsci argued that it does so with the help of intellectuals. But he added that intellectuals could also play a significant tole in the revolutionary transformation of society. He argued that intellectuals provide a philosophy for the masses so that they do not question the ruling position of the bourgeoisie. In this respect, Gramsci talked of two categories of intellectuals: *traditional* intellectuals: and *organic* intellectuals. The former largely refers to those who think that they are not linked to any class. In this sense, they are independent. Organic intellectuals, on the other hand, are those who are actively and closely associated either with the ruling class or with the masses. Those who are associated with the ruling class churn out ideas, which helps in legitimizing the rule of one class over the other. Those who are associated with the masses work for and provide leadership to bring about revolutionary change in society. Such intellectuals emerge from within the working class.

19.3.3 Philosophy of Praxis

Gramsci wrote in his ***Prison*** *Notebooks* that his philosophy of praxis is a reform and a developed form of Hegelianism. For him, philosophy of praxis is interaction of theory and practice. In Marx's writings, praxis refers to creative and self-creative activity through which human beings create and change their historical universe and themselves. It is activity specific to human beings and it differentiates them from other beings. It is a mix or rather interaction of theory and practice in such a way that theory enriches practice and practice enriches theory. Marx had discussed the notion of praxis in his *Theses on Feuerbach*. Gramsci treated Marxism as the philosophy of praxis. He was himself involved in practical revolutionary activity. Gramsci maintains that man can affect his own development and that of his own surroundings only in so Far as he has a clear view of what possibilities of actions are open to him. To do this, he has to understand the historical situation in which he finds himself and once he does that, he can play an active part in modifying that situation. The man of action is the true philosopher and

the philosopher must of necessity be a man of action. Gramsci holds the view that man does not enter into relations with the natural world, just by being himself a part of it, but actively by means of work and technique. It is only through historical awareness and understanding of historical circumstances in which man finds himself that he can remake his surroundings and remake himself.

19.3.4 Relations between the Base and the Super-Structure and the Notion of Historic Bloc

It was in 1914-15 when Gramsci attended some lectures on Marxism that he got interested in the problem of relations between the base and the super-structure. You would recall that Marx had expressed the view that no society can undergo any transformation till necessary and sufficient conditions for such transformation are already there. One form of society cannot be replaced by another, unless it has developed all forms of life which are inherent and implicit in its economic relationship. In the *Critique of Political Economy,* Marx had stated that "no social order ever perishes before all the productive forces for which there is room in it have developed; and new higher relations of production never appear before the *material conditions* for their existence have matured in the womb of old society". For Marx, the economic order of society constituted the base and the political order constituted the super structure, The nature of super structure depended on the nature of the economic base. Gramsci modified this Marxian position. He talked of a historic bloc. The historic bloc for Gramsci was a situation when *both* objective and subjective forces combine to produce a revolutionary situation. It is a situation when the old order is collapsing and there are also people with *will* and *historical insight* to take advantage of this situation. The union of base and super-structure, material conditions and ideologies, constitute the historic bloc. In other words, even when the material forces have reached a point where revolution is possible, its occurrence would depend on correct intellectual analysis in order to have a rational reflection of the contradictions of the structure.

For Gramsci, dialectics means three things:

i) interaction between the intellectuals (party leaders) and the masses;

ii) explanation of historical developments in terms of thesis, anti-thesis and synthesis;

iii) the relation between the sub-structure and super-structure.

In vulgar Marxism, the super-structure i.e., ethics, laws, philosophy, art and the whole realm of ideas is directly conditioned by the economic system, by means of production and exchange. Material conditions determine man's consciousness' Gramsci criticized this view. Like Lukacs, he argued that revolution and preparations for it would involve profound changes in the consciousness of masses. Dialectics in the physical world are different from dialectics in society. In physical nature, it is the backlash of physical forces but in society, it is a moment in which men contribute to becoming a deliberate force in the dialectical process. Thus, it is the moment when *sub-structure* and *super-structure interact on each other to produce a historic bloc.*

You must have noticed that there is a lot in common between Lukacs and Gramsci. Both emphasized the role of cultural and philosophical factors in understanding historical materialism of Marx. Both brought out the element of Hegelian idealism in Marx. Both attached greater

importance to consciousness than to material forces. Both saw the relationship between the base and the super structure in a new light.

19.4 FRANKFURT SCHOOL (OR CRITICAL THEORY)

Frankfurt School refers to a group of philosophers who were together at the Frankfurt Institute for Social Research during'the 1920s and 30s. Prominent members of the school were Horkheimer, Adorno, Pollock, Eric Fromm, Neumann and Herbert Marcuse. All of them, one way or the other, contributed to the Marxist theory. Of course, there were differences among them on many issues, but there is some common streak which emerges from their writings. Their view also came to be called Critical Theory. They were all critical of all forms of domination and exploitation in society. They were also critical of they Stalinist variety of socialism. They argued that Marxism was not a closed system. They are more concerned with cultural and ideological issues than with political economy which is the core of orthodox Marxism.

19.4.1 Opposition to all Forms of Domination

At the very outset, you must understand the context in which they wrote and the issues which bothered them. They wrote in a period which was marked by the rise of Nazism (in Germany) and Fascism (in Italy). Moreover, the rise of Stalinism in the Soviet Union with its totalitarian thrust was a cause of serious concern for them. They were also aware of the failure of communist movements in western Europe. They were critical of all ideologies because ideologies do not offer a true account of reality. They were particularly critical of those ideologies which attempt to conceal arid legitimize systems of exploitation and domination. Through critical analysis of such ideologies, they wanted to trace the hidden roots of domination in them. By doing so, they tried to create true consciousness among the masses and prepare them for revolutionary action. Thus, their goal like Marx is revolutionary transformation of society, but in a different. way.

They were critical of cultural and social philosophies and practices which aim at offering a false escape from monotonous every day life under capitalism, or which advocates the idea that inequalities are not man-made, but natural or have come from God.

19.4.2 Critique of Orthodox Marxism

The Frankfurt School tried to offer a critique of some of the notions of orthodox Marxism which had acquired repressive and authoritarian intent in the Soviet Union. Some of them even went to the extent of saying that Marxism is not adequate to explain trends like *bureaucratization*. Like Lukacs and Gramsci, they also questioned the Marxian doctrine of historical materialism which tries to explain all stages in historical developments in economic terms. They argued that it underplays the role of human subjectivity. In fact, they tried to show that this 'determinist' thrust (economic base determining everything) was the result of Marx's acceptance ofpositivist *methodology* of *natural* sciences. Moreover, the contradiction between forces and relations ofproduction may not have similar results in all societies. It will depend on how people view these contradictions and how they try to resolve them. History is made by the situated conduct of partially knowing subjects. Therefore, for understanding any historical situation, it is essential to comprehend the interplay between socio-economic structure and social practices.

19.4.3 In Search of Emancipation

The central concern in the writings of the Frankfurt school is *domination* and *authority*. They argued that in liberal as well as socialist societies, domination and authority are justified in the name of reason which they call *instrumental rationality*. In fact, it is the result of the application of the positivist methods of natural sciences to social sciences. In natural sciences, we study the physical phenomenon with a view to control and regulate it, but in human sciences the object of study of society should not be to control and regulate human beings, but to emancipate them from all sorts of bondages. All socio-cultural practices in western as well as eastern societies are aimed at stablizing the system of domination. In this sense, you can treat the Frankfurt School as the advocate of a *counter-culture*. They are also critical of authoritarian family structures and the socialization processes in education. They stand for sexual liberation as well. They are critical of the processes by which public opinion is manipulated by political pal-ties and through market research and advertising agencies.

19.5 SUMMARY

In the foregoing pages, we have discussed three major streams in Marxism which have been witnessed during the twentieth century; those associated with Lukacs. Gramsci and the Frankfurt School. While they do differ with each other in matters of detail, there are some common elements in all the three of them. For example, they underplay the Marxian doctrine of historical materialism where the economic base determines the super-structure. Instead, they emphasize the role of human consciousness and will (Lukacs) and cultural aspects (Gramsci and Frankfurt School). All the three attempt to explain why bourgeois rule and capitalism have not been overthrown as Marx had predicted. Why is it that despite the existence of a large proletariat class in several societies, revolutionary change has not occurred? In their search for answers to these questions, they found that the mere existence of the proletariat class is not enough for a revolution to occur; this proletariat class must acquire the necessary revolutionary consciousness. They also found that ruling classes are able to maintain their hegemony and domination by various subtle methods like imposing their cultural norms, their beliefs and values on the masses. It is the responsibility of intellectuals to guide the masses in this respect. They also explained how and by what methods the authority structures of domination are legitimized in order to ensure stability of the system.

19.6 EXERCISES

1) What is the main contribution of Lultacs to the Marxist theory?

2) What did Gramsci mean by hegemony'? In what way did lie modify the orthodox Marxian position?

3) What is meant by the Frankfurt School? What critique of liberal and socialist societies did it offer?

UNIT 20 SOCIALISM

Structure

20.1 Introduction

20.2 The Doctrine of Social Progress, Individualism and Capitalism

20.3 Socialism: Meaning and Early Strands

20.4 Karl Marx and Socialism

20.5 Critiques of Marxism and Democratic Socialism

20.6 Exercises

20.1 INTRODUCTION

In this unit, we will discuss the following issues: What is it that calls forth the need for socialism? And, what is socialism? Socialism is a set of doctrines or a cluster of ideas and a political programme that emerged at the beginning of the 19th century. It arose out of a revolt against bourgeois property. Property in all "civilized" societies has been considered sacred. (Exceptions were "primitive" communities also known as tribal.) In bourgeois society, it loses it sacredness but gets a new type of sanction; it now becomes an inalienable right. (Inalienable is anything which cannot be separated from the person, something entrenched with the individual.) What then are the implications of property rights as inalienable?

One main objective of the state is taken to be to ensure the liberty ofproperty. Right to private property has been regarded, by much of the liberal theory, as the key to liberty of the individual and to the pursuit of his happiness. To John Locke, the father of liberal view of society, right to "life, liberty and property" is a natural right and human beings enter into a contract to create a state for the protection of this right. From then on, through Adam Smith to Jeremy Bentham and the modern proponents of capitalism (which now has taken an aggressive posture under globalisation in our times) the institution of private property has been politically sacrosanct and an essential condition of social progress.

20.2 THE DOCTRINE OF SOCIAL PROGRESS, INDIVIDUALISM AND CAPITALISM

The doctrine of social progress is predicated on the assumption that the perusal of (rational) self-interest by every individual will over a period of time, even if temporary set backs have to be faced, lead to social good. This means that general social welfare will be the result of individual maximization of interest. This prevailing view of the new man was well captured by Alexander Pope in the following verse:

Thus God or nature formed the general frame

And bade self-love and social be the same.

We all know Adam Smith's oft quoted maxim of the "invisible hand." Everyone is not only a maximizer of self-interest, but is an infinite appropriator and an infinite consumer of goods of every kind. Property is the measure of man and in a capitalist society, whichever way one looks at it, all routes converge on property and through it the individual's pursuit of his

happiness. What we get, as a picture of man under such a social arrangement is an egoistic person, dissociated from all other individuals and all by himself in a space called the market place.

This extreme individualism is best captured in the words of John Locke, the father philosopher of liberalism. He says, the state exists to promote civil interest and "civil interest I call life, liberty, inviolability of body, and the possession of such outward things as Money, Lands, Houses, Furniture and the like." ('A Letter Concerning Tolerance'). He then argues that "Though the earth ... be common to all men, yet everyman has a 'property' in his own 'person'. This nobody has a right but himself." (Two Treatises of Government, Ch.: 'Of Property'.) It is clear in the above statement that bourgeois property is exclusively individual and that it legitimates the exclusion of others from it. (In feudal property, other members too had entitlements on the fruits of property.) In this view of things, there is no sense of an individual's social obligation to others or of sharing in the benefits of a social system in the creation of which people cooperate together. In any complex system, even property is the result of the common exertions of people, but its possession is always exclusively private. The common good is identified with the individual good. The individual good is each man for himself. The state has the function to ensure that those who succeed in acquiring property have full protection.

All the means of production (land, factory, raw material, tools and instrument and such other things which go into the production of necessities of life & other goods) in such a society are privately owned. And these get, as history shows, concentrated in fewer and fewer hands as capitalist production is based on (increasing) accumulation. This has two very important consequences for society. First, all decisions about investment choices – which commodities to produce and in what quantities – is determined by a small group of people who own these means of production. Whether the commodity is socially beneficial or not is not the main consideration. What determines the investment choices is whether effective demand can be created. In other words, profitability of goods is the sole consideration in the making of choices about investment. Whether luxury cars will be produced when there is a crying need for buses – public transport – is left to be decided by the profit motive of the individual entrepreneurs; same is the case whether guns or bombs should have precedence over the urgent need to have a hospital or a school. Production in society is without any plan and often can be of a wasteful nature; expensive fatless potato chips can score over the need for cheap bread which ordinary people may badly require. Distribution following from the above investment choices for wrong kind of commodities goes on regardless of social need or urgency of one who can pay.

Secondly, such an economic system or mode of production creates a class freed from social and legal obligations to perform labour. This is the class of capitalists. It stays out of the labour process and imposes the burden of productive labour on the rest of the society. So we have a large part of society, a majority, who live solely on their wages which in turn are determined by the cost of reproducing the labour power of the person as well as the demand and supply of labour. We, thus, find that the capitalist society is sharply divided between those who own the capital and other means of production and those who have nothing but empty hands and sell this labour power under conditions which are loaded against them. Just look around the world to see the truth of this statement.

A society with such a class division cannot respect the person who labours. One who labours is dispossessed as he just survives on the wages he receives. Property and possession is the basis of esteem. All the econoinic privileges, social predominance and prestige are with those

who own the means of production, the capitalists. All of these social assets are means to and provide immediate access to political power. That is why the bourgeoisie in capitalist societies have rightly been called the ruling class, the class with the power to determine the main features of any capitalist society. In sum, we can say that class determines the structure of society, which in turn conditions the values, attitudes, actions, and the overall articulation of any civilization.

So when we talked in the beginning that socialism has been a revolt of sorts against bourgeois property, it was not just property per se, but the entire system of production and government that the bourgeois property gives rise to and imposes on the rest of the society.

20.3 SOCIALISM: MEANING AND EARLY STRANDS

What is the shape that this revolt takes; in other words what is socialism? In the early decades of the nineteenth century, the common elements of what was emerging as the socialist outlook were falling in place. There grew the

> .... Conviction that the uncontrolled concentration of wealth and unbridled competition was bound to lead to increasing misery and crises, and that the system must be replaced by one in which the organisation of production and exchange could do away with poverty and oppression and bring about a redistribution of the world's gifts on a basis of equality. (Leszek Kolakowski, Main Currents of Marxism)

Early socialism did not grow into any clear-cut doctrine, but a set of values and beliefs held together by the view that private ownership of production should be replaced. But there was no unanimity about "replaced by what." There were common currents of thinking that some or other form of common ownership of productive property should be the basis of social organisation of society.

Socialism is not against property per se. For example, owning a flat or a refrigerator or driving in one's own car does not militate against the spirit of socialism. All these are consumable items. When socialism talks against the private ownership ofproperty, it means such properly, which is productive and yields profit, or rental income; that is, the private ownership of means of production. Early socialists thought that property is theft. This comes to mean that the owners of means of production cheat the worlcers – the direct producers – of whatever. production which takes place over and above the wages paid to them. This denial of what they produce is theft. The accumulation of this theft is property in the form we see it in our societies. Being a theft it is morally unacceptable. So it must be abolished and as a form, private ownership must be converted into one or another form of common ownership.

The later socialists did not consider property as a theft, but viewed it as the appropriation and accumulation of the surplus value that the worker produces. This process is built into the labour process, which produces goods for exchange in the market. It is, therefore, internal and structural to the capitalist process and this is also instituted in law and is therefore, legal. So it cannot be theft, but is exploitation and nevertheless remains, from a normative point of view, illegitimate and unacceptable. Therefore, they agreed with the early socialists that it must abolished and common social ownership instituted. This common notion about the unwelcome nature of private ownership of the means of production and following on that, the idea of one

or another form of common ownership is what unites the socialists, anyone who agrees with these views is a socialist, whatever else their differences. This common outlook is well summed up in the following words. Socialism is:

> "That organisation of society in which the means of production are controlled, and the decisions on how and what to produce and on who is to get what, are made by public authority instead of by privately-owned and privately managed firms". (Joseph A. Schumpeter, Capitalism, Socialism and Democracy.)

Within these broad agreements, it is the differences about (a) how does one replace capitalisin and (b) what exactly is the version of social ownership, which, create so many different schools of socialism. There is finally the all important question of how does one arrive at socialism; in other words, who will bring it about. In lookingat these questions, we will know the different versions or schools of socialism.

In the aftermath of the French Revolution of 1789, two important features changed in the way people related to the world. The French revolution put into the shape of political agenda, the theories of Enlightenment and it furthermore, enthroned the value of equality (and fraternity) as of the same importance as liberty and thus, egalitarianism became a creed with the masses. The second momentous development was the fast emerging working class all over western Europe in the wake of the Industrial Revolution, a class large and growing in number but living in deep misery.

Early socialism grew as a popular movement with a festive play of ideas. The earliest of the voices were those of Robert Owen (1771-1858), Saint – Simon (1760-1825), Charles Fourier (1772-1837) and Proudhon (1809-65) and many lesser figures. But it was only with Karl Marx (1818-1883) that a general theory of socialism emerged which could rival those of Adam Smith or Ricardo about capitalism. The ideas and prescriptions of these men were very different, but there was a general accent, which was common. An emphasis on social as against individual, cooperation as against selfishness or egoism, cooperative activity as against competition; they all agreed private ownership and market competition is bad for common good and that inspite of large increases in production, there has been no social progress. Social progress as society-wide happiness can come about only with the removal of the criteria of profit and its replacement by a system of rewards based on moral adequacy of claims.

Robert Owen was the first to use the word Socialist in 1827 in his Cooperative Magazine. He was a self-made Scottish Cotton Manufacturer who believed Industry-Factory could work as the liberator of mankind from poverty and ignorance. This could happen only if, as he showed, production is organised on cooperative principles and not on competition. He carried on many experiments in cooperative organisation of production. On a nation wide scale, only the state could do it. He also believed that human nature could be transformed, if environment could be reconstructed. In this reconstructed environment, education would be a powerful conditioning influence. He also advocated the formation by public authorities of "villages of cooperation" to put the unemployed to work. He looked at cooperation not merely as a better alternative to competition in production, but also looked at it as a way for moral improvement of human beings. Owen was also a strong advocate of the right to work. He addressed memorials to the heads of states of Europe in 1817 urging them to implement his new proposals so that an 'age of plenty' could be ushered in for the human race. He ideas caught the imagination of the working classes in Britain who moved on to build popular movements around his ideas leading eventually to the formation of trade unions which in his times, were considered illegal.

A different socialist vision emerged from Charles Fourier who came from a merchant family made impoverished during the French Revolution. Waste, inefficiency, boredom, and inequality of modern work appalled Fourier. His main interest was in making work pleasant and adjusted to the character of the individual. Therefore, he found division of labour unacceptable because it broke up work into minute repetitive operations. Unlike Robert Owen, he did not believe in the efficacy of big industry. Work should be concentrated in the countryside and small shops in towns where family life can be lived in communities and where all can know each other. Work can be varied and enjoyable only if competition is eliminated and organised in cooperatives of small producers. Goods should be well crafted and good to look at and made to last. He, therefore, opposed large industry, which he felt threatened individuality and the pleasure of work. He was a spokesman of the fast dwindling craft manufacturers who conceived and executed work all by themselves, unlike in modern industry where conception and execution of work is separated from each other.

Saint-Simon was, in contrast to Fourier, a man of science, industry and large administration. He was Rousseauian in spirit in that he believed the common man of work to be good, honest and virtuous. He disliked both aristocrats (corrupt) and scholars (arrogant) may be because he came from an impoverished junior branch of an aristocratic family. He was all for people's causes. He fought in the American War of Independence and strongly supported the French Revolution. Like Owen, he was a great believer in science, technology and Industry. The nineteenth century, he foresaw as the era of science and industry from which will follow the unity of mankind and the prosperity of (wo)man. But in contradiction to his distrust of scholars as arrogant, he believed that social reconstruction should follow the advice of what he called 'luminaries' – a learned elite. They must work towards the redesigning of social institutions with the aim of moral, intellectual and physical improvement of the poorest who also happen to be the most numerous class in society. In all of this, the state has to play a central role. The state must find work for all because all are capable of and want to work. What made him a socialist was his conviction that there is room only for one class in society, the workers. Wages should be according to one's capacity to work for the good of society. The non-workers are layouts and should be weeded out. Through state control of education and propaganda, the state should seek to bring about harmony.

Another very important figure among the early socialists was Proudhon. He was the one who explicitly referred to property as theft and also had a very polemical argument with Marx on the nature of property and poverty. He wrote a book called Philosophy of Poverty to which Marx replied with Poverty of Philosophy, pointing to the inadequacies of his philosophical convictions. One central concern of Proudhon wns the importance of liberty of the ordinary people. He thought that the greatest obstacle in the way of realisation of liberty is inequality. So we can say that equality was sought by Proudhan as a precondition of liberty and in that sense, he is in tune with modern radical ideas. An equalitarian ethos, Proudhan believed, can only be achieved in a classless society, but he shunned the idea of classwar for social change. Voluntary agreement of the working people should lead the way towards a classless society. He advocated a nation wide system of decentralised workers cooperatives, which can bargain with one another for mutual exchange of goods and services. At the apex, constituent assemblies of these cooperatives should define the nature of the state, which in effect meant that the bourgeois oppressive state will cease to be.

It is clear from the exposition of the views of the four leading exponents, there were many lesser ones too, that 'early socialism', was not any kind of theory, but a festive play of ideas

against capitalism arid all that it represented. Many of these ideas are still around us, in different garbs and exercise considerable influence. Marx was both critical and appreciative of these' writings on socialism. He critically referred to them as purely "Utopian" in character. What is utopian about these, for Marx? There is, first of all, no conception of "revolutionary action." What are the forces within **the,** capitalist society who will fight to replace it and how they will fight? Instead what we have, secondly, is an assortment of vague and diffuse ideas. All the early socialists were sceptical of class struggle waged by the working class. They all talked of, as we have seen above, voluntary agreements, change of heart, propaganda and practical carrying out of social plans, personal inventive actions, small experiments expanding into society-wide activity, even while all agreed that the working class is the most suffering class, but that the entire society be convinced through peaceful means of the need to replace capitalism without distinction of class. Marx thought that it would be impossible to bring about socialism by such means. But he appreciated tlie contribution of these writers. He thought that by these "instinctive yearning for the reconstruction" of society, these early thinkers had succeeded in creating an atmosphere in favour of socialism. Moreover. as Marx remarked in the Communist Manifesto, these ideas became 'valuable materials for enlightenment of the working class'. So Marx's attitude was one of criticism without being dismissive as happened with many later Marxists.

20.4 KARL MARX AND SOCIALISM

Marx's importance in the history of the struggle for socialism lies in the fact that he was the first man who could propound a theory of socialism, which could, as noted earlier, rival and stand on an equal footing with the theory of capitalism developed by Ricardo and **Adam** Smith. Marx did not simply propound a theory in the old style, but developed a doctrine which unified, or at least so he claimed, theory with practice such that theory could guide practice and practice could rectify the errors in theory. In short, what Marx did was to build up a theory of revolutionary action identifying the class, which will carry out the revolutionary task of replacing capitalism with socialism.

In a general historical theory of, in what has now come to be known as historical materialism, (a) why and how human societies change, and (b) what further changes are in store for human society, Marx showed that historical change is neither accidental nor a result of sheer will; that it has laws which are dialectical. Contradiction is the essence of dialectics. This contradiction is not logical (like incompatibilities in an argument) but an inner attribute of reality. Social reality is more discernibly marked by this inner contradiction. (In contradistinction to logical, let us call contradiction, in Marxian view, as ontological.) This fact of contrary pulls or oppositions within a reality impels a movement in reality. In other words, society changes because of its inner contradictory pulls towards evolving stages. Like in other earlier stages (feudalism for example), so in capitalism, it is its internal contradictions which propel it towards change into something else. I-low?(What are dialectics and their laws and the exact working of this, etc. we have discussed in another unit on Marxism.)

Every mode of production (sum total of forces and relations of production) gives rise to two classes, in perpetual opposition to each other. One is the ruling or the exploiting class and the other is the oppressed or the exploited class. The constant conflict and opposition between these two classes to get the better of the other is class struggle. Marx remarks in the very beginning of Communist Manifesto that "The history of all hitherto existing society is the history of class struggle." He then goes on to remark:

> Our epoch, the epoch of the bourgeoisie, possesses, however, this distinctive feature: it has simplified the class antagonisms. Society as a whole is more and more splitting up into two great hostile camps, into two great classes directly facing each other: Bourgeoisie and proletariat. (Manifesto)

So, one pole of the Marxist structure of theory is class struggle.

It was in terms of this that Marx had concluded after a very detailed study of the capitalist mode of production (in Capital, Vol.1) that contradictions within it would go on intensifying leading to increasingly intense struggle between the capitalists and the working class. This would give rise to a revolutionary consciousness among the workers and teach them that only a take over of power from the minority of capitalists could create conditions to free the working class from exploitation and lead to the emancipation of society.

All this sounds neat, and on the face of it, is persuasive too. But it begs the question. What needs an answer is; why should the contradiction intensify so much that the proletariat will feel compelled to overthrow the bourgeois rule and institute its own in place of that? There is an elaborate answer for this in Marx, which is what makes Marx claim that his system is scientific. (But it is not easy to summarise, still an outline is required to complete the answer.)

This then takes us to the second pole of Marxian analyses. which looks at the future of class struggle from the view point of the process of accumulation of capital and the rate of exploitation. These two are internally related to each other. There is first the appropriation of surplus value (S.V.) from the labourer. The labourer who is given a wage is paid at the cost of reproducing his labour power, that is, what it costs to buy the subsistence goods for living. In other words, the labour power of the worker is bought in the same way as any other commodity, say iron or cloth or whatever else is needed to produce further goods, i.e. at the cost of its production. So labour power is like a commodity among other commodities. It has been. established that he reproduces that much of value in 4/5 hours of work, whereas a worker normally works for 8/10 hours. The extra hours of work that he puts in is the basis ofadditional value that he produces which is appropriated by the capitalist. This Marx calls exploitation, a built-in structural and relational feature of capitalist production, which has nothing to do with cheating or theft. It is legal and necessary For capitalism.

Such a process goes on along with improvements in the technical means of production. Over a long period of time, the cost of machinery and other fixed capital – known as Constant Capital (C.C.) becomes more and more expensive in relation to the cost of hiring labour power– referred to as Variable Capital (V.C.). In other words, in the overall (composition) of capital, there is an increase in the relative importance of C.C. vis-à-vis V.C. This goes on as the capitalist mode of production progresses. This Marx shows leads to the centralisation of capital; that is, the ownership of capital gets into fewer and fewer hands; the big fish eating the small ones, as we popularly hear. This Marx further shows leads to a fall in the rate of profit. To compensate for this. the capitalist tries to intensify exploitation, which means he tries to increase the rate of exploitation and this is resisted by the workers. This results in the impoverishment of the working class in relative as well as absolute terms vis-8-vis the capital ist. This Marx demonstrates will necessarily lead to greater and greater class struggles leading eventually to the overthrow of capitalism and the capture of power by the workers. That is why Marx could say in the *Manifesto* that "What the bourgeoisie therefore produces, above all, are its own grave-diggers." The first stage of the working class rule is the establishment of

the dictatorship of the proletariat which prepares the way for the establishment of socialism which then paves the way for communism – the stage where everyone works according to capacity and takes according to need; the world of choice.

20.5 CRITIQUES OF MARXISM AND DEMOCRATIC SOCIALISM

At the end of the unit, it is important to look at a two way challenge to Marxism that emerged at the end of the 19th century. This took the shape, during the course of the 20th century, to evolutionary or "democratic" socialism. (Many other versions like Guild Socialism and Syndicalism and so on are also there, but we will not deal with these as these are by now unimportant and can also be easily read in any chapter on socialism in a standard theory book).

When the workers' revolution did not take place, as Marx had foreseen that it soon will, there emerged strong reservations about Marxism as a body of doctrines. One who expressed this in systematic terms was a long time German Marxist Eduard Bernstein. In a book entitled Evolutionary Socialism, lie elaborated a wholly different route to and tactics for achieving a socialist society. The other line of development took shape not because revolution did not come about, but because a large group of British Socialists had intrinsic reservations about Marxism. They thought that some of its goals and methods and tactics will result in authoritarian, despotic politics. They took exceptions to goals like the dictatorship of the proletariat, class warfare, violent overthrow of capitalism etc. To further an alternative way of achieving socialism together with strengthening democracy, leading socialists formed themselves into a Fabian Society in the middle of the 1880's and this version eventually came to be known as Fabian Socialism. Important names within this tradition are Sydney and Beatrice Webb, G.D.H. Cole, Bernard Shaw, Laski, Tawney, and many others. (Remember that some leading Indian nationalist leaders Icd by Nehru during the Freedom Struggle were deeply influenced by this current and which after independence gave birth to in the middle of 1950's to the idea of "Socialist Pattern of Society.")

Bernstein argued that tlie wages of workers are not falling but are, relatively rising because the rate of profit is not, as Marx argued, decliningand therefore, the expected impoverishments of the workers and the consequent uprising will not come about. Rather, the workers would get more and more integrated into the capitalist system. Hence, the need is to work within the capitalist system by accepting its institutional framework of parliament, elections, open political activity and thereby, striving to improve the condition of the working class. The class of workers has already become the majority and by proper organisation, it is now possible to win a majority in parliament and strive towards socialist ideals. In short, they declared that there is no need for revolution. (This viewpoint came to be termed, in organised Marxism, as 'revisionism' and 'reformism', a pejorative way of referring to those who abdicated their responsibility of working for the revolution.)

Through the different routes, these two critiques of Marxism came to similar conclusions, which can be stated as the core tenets of "democratic socialism". Four of these deserve a mention. First, socialisin is not as Marx thought a historical necessity or inevitable but a moral need for the good of humanity. Humanity can realise its potential only within a radical egalitarian ethos. Far this to happen, people will have to be won over for socialism and parliamentary majorities gained by carrying political education among the masses. It is,

theretore, important to realise, secondly, that in a transition to socialism it is not only the working class, but the entire people who will play a part; working class as the predominant part of the world will no doubt be strategic. But middle classes too can be imbued with socialist ideas and can play a major role .in building public opinion.

Thirdly, the route to socialism will not be through a violent rupture, as Marx thought, but would be by a gradual ascent. In this, by degrees, through closely interconnected legislative measures, the structure of socialist economy can be put in place. Equal opportunity of effective participation in the running of the state, cooperation rather than competition, equality to fully develop human personality and similar other values will become norms of society. And, lastly, the state will remain an institution ofstrategic importance. Through a series of nationalisation measures, the state will ensure that the private ownership of the means of production will be socialised; that is, different forms of state and cooperative ownerships in industry and public services like health care, education, electricity, railways, etc., will be instituted. Every body will thus have equal access and entitlement to goods and services. That is how the planned economy of public ownership of the means of production together with the deepening of democracy and freedom of intellect will be the way for the emancipation of humanity.

Socialism is no simple, monolithic doctrine like Soviet communism was. It represents a variation upon variation, a multiplicity of viewpoints but, as we have seen, sharing some core assumptivns and presuppositions. One such presupposition is that every human being is capable of making an equal contribution to the common good and this can only be done when human beings exert together for common welfare. Socialism is a special form of democracy which extends the idea of freedom from civil and political rights to equal claims on economic well-being and social status and this can only be achieved when human beings cease to be egoistically competitive as under capitalism. So long as capitalism is there with its exploitation and disregard for human dignity in favour of efficiency of production and market equilibrium, the yearning for socialism will be there; the revolt against bourgeois property will not come to an end.

20.6 EXERCISES

1) Explain what is socialism.

2) Write an essay on the doctrine of social progress in the context of individualism and capitalism.

3) Discuss any two early trends in socialism.

4) Discuss Karl Marx's Theory of socialism.

5) Examine the critiques of Marxism.

6) Describe the salient features of Democratic Socialism.

UNIT 21 CONSERVATISM

Structure

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21.1 INTRODUCTION

Conservatism, as a philosophy dedicated to the defense of an established order or an attitude with a defensive strategy to maintain the present status quo or in the classical sense of a 'right-wrong ideology', is an important intellectual force today. That it is flourishing in the realm of ideas can be seen in a core of principles recognised in most societies of our times. The philosophers of conservatism are one in highlighting the principles on which conservatism bases itself. These principles, as Clinton Rossiter sums up, are: (i) The existence of a universal moral order sanctioned and supported by organised religion; (ii) The obstinately imperfect nature of men in which unreason and sinfulness lurk always behind the curtain of civilized behavior; (iii) The natural inequality of men in most qualities of mind, body and character; (iv) The necessity of social classes and orders, and the consequent folly of attempts at leveling by force of law; (v) The primary role of private property in the pursuit of personal liberty and the defense of social order; (vi) The uncertainty of progress, and the recognition that prescription is the chief method of such progress as a society may achieve; (vii) The need for a ruling and serving aristocracy, (viii) The limited search of human reason and the consequent importance of traditions, institutions, symbols, rituals and even prejudices; (ix) The fallibility and potential tyranny of majority rule, and the consequent desirability of diffusing, limiting and balancing political power.

Conservatism, as a mood, prefers liberty over equality; tradition over changes; history over politics; past over present or atleast the future; prudent over inquisitive man; and ordered society over society demanding changes.

21.2 MEANING 'OFCONSERVATISM

The term 'conservative' has a variety of meanings. It may refer to a person with a moderate or cautious behavior, or a life style that is conventional, even conformist, or a fear of, or refusal to change. Conservatism is an ideology which opposes more than it favours. Andrew Haywood ('Political Ideologies') rightly says that: "There is, for example, some truth in the belief that conservatives have a clearer understanding of what they oppose than what they favour". To that extept, conservatism is a negative philosophy which preaches resistance to or atleast wary suspicion of change: it is, therefore, adefence of the status quo. In this sense, conservatism is a political attitude rather than an ideology. People may be considered to be 'conservative' when they resist change, without subscribing to a conservative political creed. The Stalinists, in the former Soviet Union, who opposed Gorbachev's 'Perestroika' and 'Glasnost' were 'conservative' in their action, but certainly not conservative in terms of their political ideology. The desire to resist change may be a recurrent theme within conservatism, but what distinguishes a conservative from people of other ideologies is the distinctive arguments and values which a conservative employs in upholding his objectives.

Conservatism is more than an 'attitude of mind' or an 'approach to life' or what Hugh Ceril said 'a natural disposition of the human mind'. Conservatives, in fact, prefer to base their arguments on experience and reality rather than abstract principles. Conservatism is neither simple pragmatism, nor mere opportunism. It is based upon a particular set of political beliefs about human beings, the societies they live in, and the importance of a distinctive set of political values. As such, 'like liberalism and socialism, it can rightfully be described as an ideology' (Andrew Haywood).

The essence of conservatism, Russell Kirk *(The Conservative Mind)* says, "is the preservation of the ancient moral traditions of humanity and that for the conservative, custom, convention, constitution, and prescription are the roots of a tolerable civil order". He adds that "forccs of great power in nations are prescriptions in favour of local rights and private property, of habits of life, prejudices in favour of old decencies, the family, and religious dogmas".

De Kirk lists six canons of conservative thought:

1) A "belief in a body of natural law which rules society and conscience."

2) A "love ofvariety and the mystery of human existence, as opposed to narrowing uniformity, egalitarianism and utilitarianism."

3) A "conviction that civilized society requires orders and classes as opposed to a 'classless' society: equality in the judgement of God and before courts of law. Equality of condition means equality in servitude and boredom."

4) "Freedom and prosperity are inseparable, or else government becomes the master of all,"

5) A "faith in prescription, for customs, conventions and old prescriptions are checks upon anarchy and man's lust for power."

6) "Change may not be good reform, a statesman's chief virtue is prudence."

Conservatism is the philosophy of individualism, of an autonomous individual, of an individual with inalienable rights, of an individual rooted in strong moral values, of an individual nurtured in traditions.

21.3 NUMEROUS USES OF THE TERM 'CONSERVATISM'

It is much easier to locate the historical context i.e., period between 750 and 1850 as a response to the rapid series of changes in which conservatism evolved than to specify what is or what the conservatives believe. Sometimes, conservatism means outright opposition to all and every change; at others, it means an attempt to reconstruct a form of society which existed in an earlier period. Still at other times, it appears to be primarily a political reaction and secondarily, a body of ideas.

Conservatism, as Clinton Rossiter says, "is a word whose usefulness is matched only by its capacity to confuse, distort and irritate." He adds: "Since the patterns of thought and action it denotes are real and enduring, and since no substitute seems likely to be generally accepted, conservatism will doubtless have a long life..." Since World War II, the word 'conservatism' is being used in numerous ways..

21.3.1 Temperamental Conservatism

Conservatism, by one definition, denotes a 'natural' and culture-determined disposition to resist dislocating changes in a customary pattern of living and working. According to Rossiter, "It effectively is, a temperament or psychological stance, a cluster of traits that are on daily display by most men in all societies;' He lists the important elements of conservative temperament as (a) habit (the enormous fly-wheel of society and its most precious conservative agent), (b) inertia (a force that often seems to be as powerful in the social world as in the physical), (c) fear (especially fear of the unexpected, the irregular and the uncomfortable), and (d) emulation (a product of both fear of alienation from the group and a craving for its approval). So understood, one may speak, with propriety, of the conservatism of the poor, of the aged and of the ignorant. "At the same time", Rossitter writes, "one must assign a high value to the conservative temperament in the pattern of social survival and even of social progress".

21.3.2 Situational conservatism

Conservatism, by a second definition, related to the first, is an attitude ofopposition to disruptive changes in the social, economic, legal, religious, political or cultural order. "It decribes", Rossiter clarifies, "somewhat less crudely and somewhat more effectively, a pattern of social behaviour, a cluster of principles and prejudices that are on daily display by many men in all developed societies." The distinguishing feature of this conservatism is the fear of change, which becomes transformed in the political arena, as Rossiter tells, "into the fear of radicalism..." In this instance, "the radicalism of men who propose to make the world order... at the expense of old values, institutions and patterns of living".

Situational conservatism is not confined only to the well-to-do; it extends to all levels of people who lament change in the status quo.

It is unfortunate that both temperamental conservatism and situational conservatism-tend to be equated to authoritarianism, obscurantism, racism, fascism, alienation, maladjustment, and 'the closed mind' studies are needed before these elements are linked to either of conservatism.

21.3.3 Political Conservatism

Conservatism, by still another definition, is the aspirations and activities, most of them defensive rather than creative, of parties and movements that celebrate inherited patterns of morality and tested institutions that oppose the reforming plans of the moderate left and the schemes of the extreme left.

Political conservatism is a phenomenon which is universal of organised society, and essentially, the defense of a going society. Reaction is not conservatism. It is the postion of men who sigh for past more intensively than they celebrate the present and who feel that a retreat back into it is worth trying. The conservative is a man essentially at rest: generally, well adjusted psychologically as well as programmatically to "a world he never made." The reactionary is a man always in motion, "refuses to", Rossiter points out, "acknowledge that whatever has been settled must henceforth be considered good or at least tolerable, and he seems willing to erase same paws, scrap some institutions, even amend his nation's constitution, so that he can roll back the social process to the time which his countrymen first went foolishly astray".

This should not mean that a restorationist is a conservative always, though there seems a relationship between a restorationist in the sense ofconservative and a revalution. In the sense of a rcstorationist, a conservative is delusionist and like a revolutionist, he may have outbursts. But it is going too far. A conservative, which a revolutionary is not, is a man of order in whose scheme of things, a shattered society has no place.

Conservatism is restorationism in so far as it comes to holding a brief for traditions, customs, morals, history and the older institutions. It is radical in so far as these all, as mentioned above, are to be protected from attacks of either liberal or socialist-Marxist measures. It is liberal is so far as its values are not challenged. It is reactionary in so far as the trace of history remains within the control of tested moral gospels. Rossiter writes: "He (conservative), like the liberal, must reason and discriminate; he, like the radical, may have to plan and gamble. The conservative as reformer, the right-wrong politician who tries to outpromise liberals in the area of welfare legislation, is an uncomfortable man. The conservative as revolutionary, the traditionalist who acts 'radically' to preserve the crumbling values and institutions of his community, is no conservative at all".

21.4 CONSERVATISM: ITS CHARACTERISTIC FEATURES

"The desire to conserve", the words which Edmund Burke used, is the underlying theme of conservative ideology, though it is not the sole objective which conservatives of all shades seek to attain. Authoritarian conservatism has often been reactionary; it either refuses to yield to change or attempts to turn the clock back. Revolutionary conservatism may use the term radical conservatism and tends to regain or reestablish or argue for a conservative fabric of revolutionary character. The characteristic features of conservatism, as evolved in different forms and conveying the fundamentals of conservatism can be identified.

21.4.1 History and Tradition

The role of history and tradition is basic to any type of conservatism. History, reduced to its essentials, is nothing but experience. It is deductive thought in matters of human relationship, Legitimacy is the work of history. "To see things authentically as a conservative", Mannheim

writes, "is to experience events in the past". True history is expressed not in linear and chronological fashion:, but in the persistence of structures, communities, habits and prejudices generation after generation. The correctness of history or of experience for that matter is a persisting conservative emphasis. This has been shown by Burke, Rourke, Oakeshott and Voegelin, to mention a few. Social reality can be understood through a historical approach: "We cannot know where we are, much less where we are going, until we know where we have been. That is the bedrock position of the conservative philosophy of history". ('Conservatism: Dream and Reality')

History is represented in traditions, and traditions constitute an important component of history. As such. a central theme of conservatism is, with regard to history, its defence of traditions, its desire to maintain established customs and institutions. Burke was talking about tradition when he conceived of society as a partnership between "those who are living, those who are dead and those who are to be born". Tradition is, Chesterton says, "a democracy of the dead." In this sense, tradition reflects the accumulated wisdom of the past. The institutions and practices of the past have been tested by time, and should the conservatives demand, be preserved for the benefit of the living and for generations to come.

21.4.2 Human Imperfection, Prejudice and Reason

Conservatism is a philosophy of human imperfection; the roots of man's basis lay more in prejudice than in reason. As against the liberals, who think of human beings as moral, rational and social, the conservatives regards men, both imperfect and unperfectable. I-Iuman beings, the conservatives believe, are dependent creatures, always fearing isolation and instability, and therefore, always seek safety, security and what is familiar, ready always to sacrifice liberty for social order. By their very nature, the people, the conservatives would say, are suspicious of abstract ideas and prefer to ground their ideas in experience and reality: they have usually an already framed view evolved from the past, a prejudice-mad? framework. "Prejudice", Nisbet argues for the conservative, "has its own intrinsic wisdom, one that is anterior to intellect. Prejudice is of ready application in the emergency; it previously engages tlie mind in a steady course of wisdom and virtue and does not leave the man hesitating in the moment of decision, skeptical, puzzled, and unresolved". Reason stems from knowledge that is learnt than imparted. The conservatives are of the opinion that imparted knowledge leads to abstractions, abstract knowledge, and for human beings, it is too complicated to be fully grasped. Learnt knowledge is rooted in experience and is limited to the doing of something, to the learning of something through committing mistakes. Such a knowledge is not the knowledge of rules and generalisations, but is one that comes from one man's experience and goes down in the blood of the other. Reason as knowledge of this time is not a cure worse than the disease, but is one that eliminates the disease.

21.4.3 Organic Society, Liberty and Equality

The conservative view of society is an organic view of society: the individuals do not and cannot exist outside society, but they are 'rooted' in society, and 'belong' to it; they are parts of social groups and these groups provide the individuals' lives with security and meaning. The conservative's view of liberty is not 'leaving the individual alone', but is one where there is willing acceptance of social obligation$ and ties. For the conservatives, liberty is primarily 'doing one's duty'. When the parents, for example, advise their children to behave in a particular way, they do not constrain their liberty, but they are providing a basis for the liberty the

children would enjoy when they grow up. The conservative view of liberty is neither atomistic nor rootless: it is the enjoyment of rights together with the performance of duties, either before or after or both.

The conservative view of society is one that is a living thing, an organism whose parts are neither equal nor the same, work together and make the human body function properly; each part of the organic society (i.e., family, government, a factory) plays a particular role in sustaining and maintaining the health of society. Heywood explains, "If society is organic, its structure and institutions have been shaped by natural forces and its fabric should therefore be preserved and respected by the individuals who live within it."

The conservative view of organic society is a unity composed of diversities: such a society is always in a hierarchical form where alone liberty works effectively and with a meaning. In such a socially differentiated society, organic as it is, equality has no place. "... most forms of equality ... seem to the conservative to threaten{ he liberties of both individual and group. liberties which are inseparable from the built-in differentiation, variety, and variable opportunity..." (Nisbet). Burke's dictum, in this context, is: "Those who attempt to level, never equalise."

21.4.4 Authority and Power

Authority and power, in the sense they are used, have much in common for a conservative. Power is used by one who is authorised to exercise it and it is the legitimate act to get what one wills. In an organic society, order has to be maintained: so power is an essential component of an organic society; in an hierarchical system, there are different levels; so authority became necessary. Power and authority are the important concepts in conservative philosophy. These, in no sense, constitute an obstacle to what the conservatives think about liberty. "The only liberty", Burke said, "I mean is a liberty connected with order; that exists not only along with order and virtue, but which cannot exist at all without them". The conservatives believe that authority, like society. develops naturally; power emerges from functions. Authority and power, the conservatives strongly feel, develop from natural society. These are natural because they are rooted in the nature of society and all social institutions. Within school, authority or power is, and in fact, should be exercised by the teacher; in the work place, by the employer; and in the society, by the government. The conservatives say that authority is necessary because it is beneficial, as every one needs the guidance, support and security of knowing where the people stand and what is expected of them. That is why all the conservatives emphasise leadership and discipline. "Leadership", Heywood says, "is a vital ingredient in any society because it has the capacity to give direction and provide inspiration for others. Discipline is ... a willing and healthy respect for authority."

No conservative believes in equality, in social equality at that. They think that people are born unequally in the sense that: talents and skills are distributed unequally: unequal should not be treated equally. The conservatives believe that inequality is more deep-rooted. Genuine social equality, for the conservatives, is therefore, a myth.

Conservatism adores power in so far as it helps establish order in society. It admires authority because it is authority through which order is established in society. Conservatives favour an authoritarian and all-powerfill state. Public order and the moral fabric of society can be maintained through the power and authority of the state. Heywood writes: "Furthermore,

within conservatism there is a strong paternalistic tradition which portrays government as a father-figure within society."

21.4.5 Property and Life

Property, for conservatives, possesses a deep and mystical significance. The conservatives hold the view that property has a range of psychological and social advantages: it provides security; gives people a sense of confidence; promotes social values. As such, the conservatives want that property must be safeguarded from disorder and lawlessness. They say that the property owners have a stalce in society. They have an interest in maintaining law and order. Property ownership promotes the conservative values of respecting the law, authority and social order. "A deeper and more personal reason", Heywood writes, "Why Conservatives may support property is that it can be thought of almost an extension of an individual's personality. People 'realise' themselves, even see themselves, in what they own".

"It is the contempt", Burke wrote, "for property ...that has led to all the other evils which have received France (the French Revolution, 1789) and brought all Europe into the most imminent danger".

Conservatism advocates the sanctity of property. In the heart of every true conservative there is, as Russell Kirk writes, "persuasion that property and freedom are inseparably connected and that economic levelling is not economic progress. Separate property from private possession and liberty is erased". Irving Babbitt added: "Every form of social justice.... tends toward confiscation, and confiscation, when practised on large scale, undermines moral standards, and in so far, substitutes for real justice the law of cunning and the law of force."

21.4.6 Religion and Morality

Conservatism is, indeed, unique among major ideologies in its emphasis on religion and morality. Irrespective of denomination, all the conservatives including Hegel, Haller and Coleridge made religion, and therefore morality, a keynote of state and society.

The conservative support for religion and morality rests on the well-founded belief that human beings, once they get aclrift from major orthodoxy, are likely to suffer some measure of derangement, of loss of equilibrium. "Religion", Burke wrote to his son, "is man's fastness in an otherwise incomprehensible and thereby hostile world". Tocqueville, before his death bed confession, described the value of religion and morality to government and society, and to freedom: "When there is no longer any principle of authority in religion anymore than in politics, men are speedily frightened at the prospect of unbounded independence. ... for my part, I doubt whether man can ever support at the same time complete religious independence and entire political freedom. And I am inclined to think that if faith be wanting in him, he must be subject; and if he be free, he must believe".

Religion is a spiritual phenomenon. But at the same time, it is an essential social cement as well. For the conservatives, there exists a close relationship between religion and conservatism, for religion provides society a moral fabric.

21.5 SOME REPRESENTATIVE CONSERVATIVES

It is only by way of completing an argument for conservatism that an attempt is being made to mention a few, and among them, two major representative conservatives; Burke and Oalceshott.

i) Burke's 'Reflections on tlie Revolution in France' has been taken as definitive and fortnative of modern conservatism, with its opposition to radical reform based on abstract principles and its plea for the virtues of established and evolved institutions. Burke's faith in the past, his admiration'of the presetit, his opposition to innovations, his small view of human nature, liis belief in the traditional outlook of society and his sympathies with men of property all these go on to make him a conservative thinker. Cobban ('Edmund Burke') remarks: "Disciple of Loclte and Whig politicians, though Burke was, the real man stands quite apart from the eighteenth century and the philosopher. A believer in antiquity in an age when the Modern had definitely conquered in their struggle with the Ancients, an adherent of the past in an age that was beginning to look to the future, he was also a philosopher of unreason in the great age of Reason."

Burke's conservatism is the basis of all his writings. Conservatism, as a theory, usually has three varieties: *(a) Status Quo:* It is one in which things are kept as they are. In every society, one finds people who are interested to keep things as they stand and who would not like to bring changes, for in a status quo, they have nothing to lose; (b) *Organizational Conservatism:* Such interests of men as favour status quo would find ways and means to protect them, promote them and defend them. Thus, comes organization which serves those who want to keep the status quo. What is organizational is conservative in nature. Yesterday's idea becomes today's movement and today's movement becomes tomorrow's organization; *(c) Philosophical Conservatism:* Once there is interest in the status quo and an organization to protect it, there is built an ideology, a philosophy around the interest to be protected. Conservatism, as a philosophy, is the building of a case for the protection and promotion of such interests.

Burke, in his writings, has passed through the above varieties of conservatism. Having stood for the admiration of the status quo, he builds the organization (parliamentary system, the political parties with national interests, etc., etc.) to support the status quo. But within the frame-work of conservatism, Burke demonstrates reformism. Until Burke's arrival, the Whig party was on the offensive. With Burke, there developed the beginning of a shift which carried the prevailing social philosophy from attack to defence.

ii) Oakeshott's plea for traditionalism, as an aspect of his conservatism in politics, morals and life, in general, proceeds logically from his critique of rationalism. According to Oakeshott, the ideological style of politics (i.e., the rationalist style) is a confused style, for ideology in the rationalist scheme, as he thinks, is merely an abridgement, an index. So, Oakeshott's answer is that the only style, one should adopt and pursue, is the traditional one. Political activity, Oakeshott affirms, cannot spring but from the existing traditions of behaviour and the form that it takes is the amendment of existing arrangements by exploring and pursuing what is implied in them. All activity, for him, therefore, is traditional in nature. Every idea, every ideal, every ideology, even the most revolutionary, as described by Oakeshott, is traditional, always an index, an abridgement of traditional manner of attending to the arrangements of society.

Political activity, for Oakeshott, is, as Minogue says, "not succumbing to an impulse, nor is it drawing an implication: it is the pursuit of an intimation ... intimations appear as a kind of via media between the extremes of logical implication and inexplicable accident." Oakeshott's solution, Minogue holds, "is to take politics as a traditional activity, the point of the word 'traditional' being to emphasize that it can only be understood in historical terms."

Tradition, Oakeshott feels, is not a fixed manner of dong thing, but is flow of sympathy. Every political activity, therefore, is a consequential activity for him, the pursuit of intimation as he fondly calls it. This means that political activity is what political activity actually is and not what it can be or it ought to be. It is what it succeeds actually in doing. All those who indulge; Oakeshott says, in revolutionary or idealistic actions indulge only in self-deception. Oakeshott writes: "In political activity, then, men sail a boundless and bottomless sea: there is neither harbour for shelter nor floor for anchorage, neither starting-place nor appointed destination. The enterprise is to keep afloat on an even keel; the sea is both friend and enemy: and the seamanship consists in using the resources of a traditional manner of behaviour in order to make a Friend of every hostile occasion."

Oakeshott regards the traditional style of politics as the only legitimate style. In this essay on "Being Consevative", he emphasizes that being conservative is to prefer the familiar to the unknown, the tried to the untried, fact to mystery, the actual to the possible, near to the distant, the convenient to the prefect, present laughter to the utopian bliss. To be conservative is to be equal to one's own fortune, to live at the level of one's means. Stability, Oakeshott says, is any day more profitable than improvement. Oakeshott is suspicious of both change and innovation and, therefore, would like people to look twice at the claims promised by a change. If the change is unavoidable, Oakeshott would then favour only small and slow changes. Only that reform, he insists, be accepted that remedies a defect or that helps disequilibrium to be redressed.

Like Burke, Oakeshott regards society as a conversation rather than an argument. "Oakeshott does not believe", Minogue says, "that the point of the conversation is to elicit truth, though at times it will doubtless do so. Indeed, the whole point of the conversation is that it doesn't have a point, and therefore many things may find a place in it which would be expelled as irrelevant in a seminar or a debate in a legislative assembly." As Oakeshott himself says, "It is with conversation as with gambling, its significance lies neither in winning nor in losing, but in wagering."

Tradition, according to Oakeshott, is described as anything under the sun. It is, he says, continuity; it is steady; though it moves, it never is wholly in motion; though it is never wholly at rest. To know, Oakeshott says, only the gist of traditionalism is to know nothing; knowledge of it is unavoidably knowledge of its detail. Oakeshott's definition is too broad to mean anything or mean nothing.

21.6 SUMMARY

Conservatism is an ideology of conservation. It developed essentially as a reaction against the growing pace of political and economic changes especially in the West. This is one reason that any use of the word 'conservatism' resists change. As a philosophy, it defends the values ofhierarchy, tradition and order against pressures generated by industrialisation and represented by the political challenges of liberalism and socialism. That is why there is a basic distinction among the leftists and socialists, libertarians and conservatives. The leftists and the socialists are the party of bureaucracy (i.e., hardcore communists); libestarians, of markets; and conservatives, of tradition.

Conservative ideology has its peculiar features: tradition and history, human imperfections with a love for prejudice and against reason, organic society with liberty and inequality,

admiration of authority and power, strong plea for property and life rights, and belief in ethical, moral and religions values.

The future of conservatism is inarred by its own limitations. Its opposition to equality and more than this, its defense of inequality make it unpopular in societies which have a strong democratic tendency. Consequently, conservatism has not succeeded in developing into an ideology of worldwide importance. In itself, conservatism is too broad and has become, to that extent, too vague an ideology: what is radical today may not be so tomorrow.

21.7 EXERCISES

1) Explain the meaning of conservatism. In how many major senses the word 'conservatism' is used?

2) What are, in your view, principles and canons of conservatism?

3) Describe briefly the characteristic features of conservatism.

4) Write a note on Edmund Burke as a conservative thinker.

5) How does Michael Oakeshott defend traditionalism? Explain in detail.

UNIT 22 FUNDAMENTALISM

Structure

22.1 Introduction
22.2 Meaning of Fundamentalism
22.3 Ideology and Fundamentalism
22.4 Core Characteristics of Fundamentalism
22.5 Identity of Secular and Religious Fundamentalism
22.6 The Fundamentalist Mind
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22.1 INTRODUCTION

Religion has been traditionally one of the major components of national identity, and at times, its most prominent feature. Almost every state comprises of groups having faith in one religion or the other: Northern. Ireland has Protestants and Catholics, Sri Lanka, Christian Tamils and Buddhist Sinhalese, India, Hindus, Muslims, Sikhs, Christians and many others, and even in a particular religion, there may be one sect or the other: the Sunnis and the Shias among the Muslims; the Arya Samajis, the Sanatan Dharmees and the Parnamis among the Hindus, for example.

In addition to religious fundamentalism, there is or what may be said, secularist fundamentalism, if fundamentalism is to be meant an uncompromising belief in the original and most basic thought frameworks of certain principles and a commitment to them. So understood, totalitarianism in the form of fascism or communism amounts to fundamentalism. Religious fundamentalism and secularist fundamentalism have much in common: conviction in the basic principles, commitment to beliefs and more or less, a fanatical zeal in methods. Fundamentalism is not necessarily always religious, it may be non-religious as well. Fundamentalism is rigid conformity to doctrines and this may be religious or ideological or both.

22.2 MEANING OF FUNDAMENTALISM

Fundamentalism is variously described by different scholars while emphasizing its one aspect or the other. This is why fundamentalism is religious as well as non-religious. Ideological fundamentalism may also be stated as one form of fundamentalism. Haywood (*Political Ideologies*) defines fundamentalism as "a belief in the original or most basic principles of a creed, often associated with fierce commitment and sometimes reflected in fanatical zeal". The implications of the term 'fundamentalism' from his definition are: (1) the belief either in the original creed or in its basic principles; (2) the belief takes the form of commitment and **(3)** the commitment takes the form of fanaticism. The word 'creed', denoting the accepting system of beliefs, becomes more or less, a religious term. If creed be taken as a religious concept, religious fundamentalism would therefore, mean, the belief in the original creed or in the basic principles of the creed together with commitment to those principles touching the

boundaries of fanaticism. In this sense, any religion may take the shape of religious fundamentalism: Christian. Islamic, Hindu and the like.

To be a man of religion and to be a fundamentalist are not the same thing, for religion is not fundamentalism. Faith in religion does not amount to faith in religious fundamentalism. Religion implies a moral order, a sublime faith and a spiritual end. Fundamentalism and especially, its religious aspect is the perversion of religion; it is the exploitation of religion, sometimes open and sometimes subtle; it is a tactical means to the wicked immoral end, converting religiosity into political/fanatical bellicosity.

Fundamentalism is opposed to secularism, rationalism, humanism and tolerance. It seeks to divide the civil society into numerous parts, pitting one against the other and preaching nothing but hatred. A fundamentalist knows his own religion and knows it in his own interest alone, and, therefore. to that extent, does not even respect his own religion. A true follower of religion is not necessarily fundamentalist; rather a fundamentalism is anti-religious. A religious fundamentalist is one who projects his religious community as distinct and separate from the others. He gives precedence to his interest over the common interest. He perceives and deals with citizens not individually but religion-wise. He, by looking at the citizens this way, distances himself from others and others from himself.

Fundamentalism is a system of beliefs; so is true about any ideology. If fundamentalism is regarded as an ideology of belief; if it is a system-belief, it is also an ideology-belief. In this sense, if there is a religious fundamentalism, there is also a non-religious, say, ideological fundamentalism. Communism, fascism, liberalism and to a degree, every ideology is also a system-belief. Every ideology to that degree is fundamentalistic. In every ideology, there are beliefs, theories, set of principles, foundational elements, followers who demonstrate faith as much as in any religion and there are people who readily accept martyrdom. **All** these features can be seen in any religious fundamentalism as well. Fundamentalism, in the general and relatively wider sense, means an ideology or belief system, commitment to which is more or less a matter of faith, both in words and deeds.

22.3 IDEOLOGY AND FUNDAMENTALISM

Ideologies arc religions as religions are ideologies in their own right. Religion becomes a pin to fundamentalism, when belief in it becomes unchallengable and the other religions are made to appear separate from it. Ideology, like religion, is a belief system against which all other ideologies become false. There is, thus, a common feature working in both, in ideology and religion and it is a system ofbeliefs. Rigidity in beliefs leads to fundamentalism, both religious and non-religious.

The relationship between knowledge and belief is, indeed, subtle, though the distinction between the two is very obvious. It is science that separates the two, Knowledge is all science or science leads to knowledge. Belief is only faith, and faith is always unscientific. But when knowledge ends up in belief, ideology and religion transform themselves into fundamentalism: ideological fundamentalism is as unscientific and bereft of knowledge as religious fundamentalism. When a religious precept says, truth shall win, it is knowledge, but when a man from a religion says that what he is saying is the truth, it is belief and therefore, has in it, all the essentials of fundamentalism. Likewise, Hitler, Mussolini or Stalin claim that their assertion alone is the gospel truth and when they want all others to believe so, it is secular or

non-religious fundamentalism. Faith, in any form of fundamentalism, is never questioned and it stays beyond the reach of any reason and enquiry. A fundamentalist of the religious type would never permit faith to be destroyed, of what he thinks to be a faith. No ideology and no leader of any ideology would ever allow to get its tenets challenged. Ganguly *(Faces of Fundamentalism)* points and rightly: "The result is that we decide about an invariant faith, whenever discrepancies arise, we have to reinterpret, modify, ignore or destroy the sources of discrepancies." As fundamentals become an article of faith, changes in the ideological belief become impossible and, it, then changes to fundamentalism.

Neither any religious nor any non-religious fundamentalist can afford any dissent, either of voice or word. Silencing of voice and pen is a significant pursuit of all forms of fundamentalism. With the development of ideological or religious thinking and the evolution of fundamentalism, a condition is created that is aptly described by Aldous Huxley: "At no period of world's history has organized lying been practiced so shamelessly....". The fundamentalist's demand is the surrender of individual consciousness to what he thinks is the basic principle of religion or ideology. With a fundamentalist, "God, Hitler, or Marx" are never wrong.

Fundamentalism need not be confused with'revivalism. With the passage of time, there do arise rigidity and complexities in the evolution of any religion. When attempts are made to modify rigid rules or in the course of such movements, new sects appear, they do not constitute fundamentalistic activities. The rise of Buddhism and Jainism as a reaction to Hinduism, reformation movement as a reaction to the Roman Catholic Church or movements launched by the Muslim reformers can not be labelled as fundamentalistic movements. These and other religious revivalisms are attempts to reform religions, reinterpret the precepts or launch a new religion. Likewise, when Lenin was trying to reinterpret Marxism or Mao seeking to introduce Marxism – Leninism in China, they were making efforts not to deviate from the Marxian tenets, though such an assertion cannot be made about Bernstein. Hitler and Mussolini, on the other hand, were merely restating totalitarian fundamentalism.

22.4 CORE CHARACTERISTICS OF FUNDAMENTALISM

Fundamentalism, though used so frequently in the present day world, has never been clear in the minds of the people so far as its meaning is concerned. The word means different things to different people. At times, it is used in a deprecatory sense without assigning any clear-cut connotation. The word first received currency from a series of publications entitled, *'The* Fundamentals' published in the linited States in 1909. Originally it indicated a belief that the Bible or for that matter any holy book of any religion is infallible as it contains the words of God. **A** fundamentalist regards his own creed or religion or a system of belief to be necessary, sufficient and eternally/completely valid.

One of the basic characteristics of fundamentalism is that it goes back to the original and to the definite sources and interprets them in its own words, asserting in the correctness of what the interpreter is saying. **A** fundamentalist's position, in this regard, is that what he is saying is the correct interpretation of the original or that the source meant what his interpretation is; a fundamentalist would not accept the opposite interpretation nor would he like to change what he thinks to be correct. In his attitude, a fundamentalist is uncompromising in his nature, he is aggressive; in his conviction, he is a fanatic. Ideology too has these features: a Hitlerite is a Hitlerite whatever be the circumstance; a liberal is a liberal whatever be at stake; a communist is a communist whatever be the temptations.

Doctrinal conformity is another characteristic feature of all fundamentalism. The fundamentalist's conviction in the doctrine is unassailable, its principles are inviolable, indefeasible, literal and absolutely binding. I-le is absolutely certain that the essential care of his belief is capable ofsolving all problems; his faith is inerrant, exclusive to all other ideologies and thus self-sufficient and incommensurate with other philosophies or ideologies. Ganguly writes: "We can clearly comprehend why 'revisionism' is a deadly crime in communism and why apostasy is punishable by death in fundamentalist Islam."

Fundamentalism does not know the language of conversation, but only that of imposition. Believing in doctrinal correctness, a fundatnentalist wants the rest of the society to conform to the doctrine. The fundamentalists, instead of participating in dialogue, control deliberations and do not hesitate to intervene, oftenly forcibly, to ensure that society is compelled to conform to the behaviours their worldview requires. Scott Bidstrup *(Why* the *'Fundamentalist' Approach to* Religion *must be Wrong?)* says: "The belief that they (the fundamentalists) arc right, without any question, justifies, in their own minds, taking upon themselves the right to impose their point of view, by force if necessary."

Fundamentalism has its own doctrine, if not the creed; it seeks to institute a harsh set of roles as political law: the *Sharia*, as in Khomeini's Iran, becomes the law of the land; so was the case in Taliban's Afghanistan; and so was Hitler's word, (or Mussolini's word in Italy) a law in Nazi Germany, and that of Stalin in the former USSR. As one Mormon leader, in the case of religious fundamentalism, once said (and this is true about any non-religious fundamentalism as well), while addressing an audience of university students: "Do not think for yourself. The thinking has already been done." A fundamentalist is never an audience, he is always a speaker.

Chauvinism is another defining characteristic of fundamentalism. While a fundamentalist of a religious type talks in the name of God, he is one who denies himself the power of God; while he makes a full cry of equality, he is, by nature, a patriarchialistic; while he claims all life based around faith, he declares all science to be wrong. While he pays a great deal of lip service to the ideals, he ignores them in practice and occasionally is contemptuous of them in private. He plays foul with religion/ideology for which he claims to live and die, if necessary.

Fundamentalism is always without a base. It starts with a conclusion and, thereafter, searches for evidence of support for the conclusion and if the fundamentalist does not find any, he creates one. It is an evidence-less exercise. This sort of methodology is not exclusive to Christianity. but can be seen in other religions too: the Christian fundamentalists are as non-scientific as other fundamentalists: Islamic, Hindu and the like. Fundamentalism promotes ignorance. It does not permit 'why'. The followers of Marx whose life motto was 'challenge everything' do not give this concession to others, not even to the Marxists themselves. Bidstrup writes: "…. Fundamentalism all too often justifies in its adherents' minds the prejudices, the zealotry, the intolerance and the hate mongering that are all the most base of human instincts". "Fundamentalism of any stripe", he continues, "is not progress: but rather I contend, is the impedance of progress,"

22.5 IDENTITY OF SECULAR AND RELIGIOUS FUNDAMENTALISM

Fundamentalism, either secular (say, non-religious) or religious, negates science and rationalism. Every religion and every ideology thrive on belief-systems where reasoning has

no place. It is. therefore. easier for some pseudo believers of any religion or ideology to turn to fundamentalism in order to seek the fulfilment of certain selfish interests. One need not be a true believer to be religious; a pseudo-Marxist need not be a true Marxist.

It is not necessary that one has to believe in God to be called religious. Many religions do not believe in a creator-deity. Buddhism, in its original form, did not postulate a creator-deity. Buddhist Japan has no word for 'God'. Confucius preached, if Confucianism is regarded a religion, it is basically a system of moral code of conduct. So is true about Taoism as well. Mussolini and Hitler were no regular visitors of any church. No Marxist believes in God or for that matter, in religion.

Many scholars see in communism (Marxism) almost all the features of a religion. The historian Toynbee says that a lasting contribution of Marx has been the historical re-affirmation of Christian moral conscience of Marxism: "Saint Augustine emphasised this through Christian theology. Marx did it through socialism." Russell has also shown that Marxistn has the structure of a religion: "it has the Yahiweh which is the Dialectical Materialism, the Messiah that is Marx, the Elect that is the Proletariat, the Church that is the Communist Party." "It has the absolute source, of mystery", he continues, "the dialectical materialism, the revelation in the form of historical laws and its deterministic unfolding and also, it has its eschatology, that is, the withering away of **the** state. the coming of the Communist Man and the ultimate advent of trans-communism."

It is difficult to deny the scientific approach which Marx adopted; it is difficult to label Marx a utopian, especially when everyone knows his efforts at theorising socialism as scientifically as possible. It is also difficult to refer to his theory as deterministic when all through he fought against determinism. But as his philosophy came down to his followers, they made it doctrinal, Lenin closing it to fundamentalism and Stalin, after completing the progression, giving it the shape of a totalitarian doctrine.

Fundamentalism and totalitarianism, in tlie political context, go together. This means that a fundamentalist has to be, by nature, totalitarian: aggressive in mood; a totalitarian, on the other hand, has to be a fundamentalist, as oppressive as he can. Hitler or Mussolini were totalitarians and fundamentalists. They were, like fundamentalists, no friend of democracy; nor any lover of rationalism. Ganguly writes: "the irrational ideologies like fascism (or one may add Nazism), or religious fundamentalism go ahead without much ado to establish their hegemony by any means including large scale distortions of truth and lying." "The rationalist ideologies like Marxism developed further doctrinal justification for lying and terror." As Hitler once said in his *Mein Kampf*: "... the greater the lie, the greater the chance that it will be believed."

22.6 THE FUNDAMENTALIST MIND

The fundamentalists are invariably doctrinaire. As such, they are essentially uncompromising. Their doctrine (of what they think that it is) admits no contradiction, no qualification of what they think is the truth; no betrayal of the essentials, and no compromise with the enemy, malting them anti-intellectual. (See James Warner Bjorkman (ed.) *Fundamentalism, Revivalists* and *Violence in South Asia*).

A fundamentalist's mind is one that does not permit the idea of unintended consequences to creep in. If anything happens, the happening must have a meaning. For a fundamentalist, the

meaning is found in the intentions of the person who has caused the act. Narrow as his thinking is, narrowly as he perceives things, the fundamentalist never thinks beyond his own thinking. For those who think the other way, it becomes a moral matter for the fundamentalist to defend and furthermore, impose his worldview over the opponents.

The fundamentalists seek to attain support of the enemies of tlie enemies, 'consolidating the bad people' as Bruce says. The US fundamentalists, Bruce explains, do not see themselves set against an array of different groups, operating with quite different and often incompatible agendas. The fundamentalists have always been enemies confronting them, or enemies always confronting fundamentalists. For the US fundamentalists, communism is not a general political philosophy, but is a single conspiracy. Referring to the US fundamentalism, Bruce writes: "Fundamentalists differ as to who is 'really" behind it all. Some think that communists are really Jews; others think that Jews are really communists. In the 1980s, with communism an obviously spent force, and the Jews suddenly elected as allies, the US fundamentalists hit on a new collective noun for their various enemies: 'secular humanists'. The Iranian Ayatollahs suppose that US imperialism, Judaism, Zionism and Christianity are all the same evil thing."

The fundamentalists are always secretive. They are liabitual in coding and decoding signs and discovering their hidden connections. "There isa long tradition", Bruce tells us, "in Protestant fundamentalim in decoding allegorical Bible passages." That the fundamentalists are close to terrorists or that they themselves are terrorists is a well-known fact in the context of Indo-Pakistan relations. They are ready to provide an all-purpose legitimization (say, 'Jehad' in the case of Islamic fundamentalism as also other terms in other religious fundamentalisms) for almost any act.

Fundamentalism, one may, therefore, conclude grossly over-simplifies, presents an underlying moral order to everything, readily demonizes its opponents and finds reds under everybed. (See Steve Bruce, *Fundamentalism*).

22.7 COMPARING FUNDAMENTALISM

Religions like ideologies vary. They differ in their potential for becorning fundamentalistic. The more monolithic a religion or ideology is, the more are the chances of it turning to fundamentalism. Islam and the evangelical Protestant strand of Christianity are monolithic religions; they believe that there is just one God; they are also dogmatic; they believe it is possible to express his (God's) nature and will in specific propositions: both these things arc the necessary pre-conditions for fundamentalism.

Hinduism, as a religion, in the context of Islam and Protestant Christianity as they arc, is less monolithic and dogmatic and hence, less fundamentalistic. There are a number of reasons for that: there is diffuseness in Hinduism, different deities, a variety of gods. So diffused is the society as well: a variety of traditions, groups, sects. It may be, Bruce says, "better described riot as a religion, but as a loose collection of religions: that of the Shaivites, the Vaishnavas, the Shalcras, the Smartas, and others – that share some common themes but they tolerate a huge variety of expressions of these themes. As those expressions can vary from village to village and caste to caste, there is a little scope for enforcing conformity, criticising laxity, or vigorously rejecting moderate reconstructions of the tradition. Instead of the single Bible or Quran, there are a large numbers of holy books and holy traditions." Hindu fundamental ism is rare and arises only when anti—Hindu fundamentalism challenges it. Within itself, revivalistic

attempts have been at work in Hinduism: sometimes in the forms of Buddhism, Jainism or Sikhism at an early period of history or in the forms of Brahmo Samaj, Arya Samaj, Ramakrishna Mission or Ved-Samaj during the greater part of the nineteenth century. Orthodoxy has always been met with revivalism in Hinduism. To that extent and arguably, monolithic religions such as Judaism, Christianity and Islam offer relatively more fertile soil for fundamentalism than Hinduism.

Protestantism and Islam have much in common. Their potentials are the same: both can generate fundamentalism; their aims are similar: each wishes to assert the primacy of its religious belief systems and the patterns of behaviour each belief system requires. But both differ in their methods. The Islamic fundamentalists believe that coercion is proper; most of them believe that it is necessary as well, while others feel that it is required, declaring 'jihad' literally. The Protestant fundamentalists do not believe so. Christ preached against the old law of 'eye for an eye' and instead recommended to offer another cheek to the person who has already hit the first check. Though radical Protestants have created militant sects, the Protestants are relatively pacifists.

Protestants and Islamists differ in their attitudes to toleration. By and large, the Protestants are tolerant while the Islamists are less so; the USA, for example, permits freedom of religious expression and attempts to prevent the state promoting one religion as superior to any other. As against this, most of the Muslim countries are far less tolerant. Referring to this, Bruce writes: "Note that this is a matter of description and not value judgement. Nothing about what I have said requires us to believe that permissiveness is better than authoritarianism."

Differences in the two monolithic religions can be cited in abundance. But that apart, what is more significant here is that Islamic fundamentalism is more potent, and more severe than Christian fundamentalism. We can turn to them briefly.

Christianity and politics, for most of the time stayed apart. It became official religion of the Roman Empire in only AD 373, though it was officially tolerated from sixty years before, i.e., 313 AD. During the Middle Ages, the theory of the two the swords kept the two domains, temporal and ecclesiastical, distinct from each other. The Reformation not only brought to the fore the two sects, Catholics and Protestants, it made religion a private affair of the individual. Liberalism, in the West, is not due to Christianity but due to its absence. Lewis says: "The distinction between the church and the state (is) ..... rooted in Christendom".

This is not to say that Christians are not religious. They are as religious minded as the followers of any other religions: many of them live a life-style which is particularly godly. Bruce says, "..... The core of Protestantism is correct belief, not correct action; orthodoxy rather than ortho-praxis." With the emergence of the modern state, century after century, Christianity remained aloof from the state, though most of the citizens in the western nations were Christians. Christian fundamentalists, in relation to the state and the law, operate in a more legitimate manner and largely .in secular countries.

Islamic fundamentalism is more pronounced, more vocal and more action-oriented. From the beginning, Islam, unlike Christianity, remained political. The Prophet and the subsequent Caliphs were both spiritual and political leaders. The founder of the Muslim Brotherhood, an Islamic fundamentalist organisation, puts it as: "Politics is part of religion. Caesar and what belongs to Caesar is for God Almighty alone." The Islamic fundamentalist promotes a life-

style which is not only conformity to the creed, it demands actions also in conformity with what the fundamentalist wants. A hostage, held by Hezbollah, puts the case of Islamic fundam'entalism, saying: "All our activities, from the way we slept to the way we entered a lavatory, were watched so that we could not violate the laws of Islam. Khomeini had written that on entering a lavatory, a believer must put his left foot forward first. We were taken to task for violating that rule." And Bruce adds: "For Islam, religion is a matter of obeying the Holy Law. As what God requires is obedience to the Law, then its imposition is not just acceptable but necessary." Most of the Muslim countries, especially in the Middle East, have not been able to shed their religion which is Islam, despite all their efforts to westernise themselves. Islam, for them, is more than a religion: it is their eye, it is their way. The Islamic fundamentalists in relation to the state, operate largely intheocratic countries and seek Muslim brotherhood and Islamic unity.

22.8 SUMMARY

Religion, as a basic urge of mankind, cannot be altogether ignored. But when it, along with any fundamentalist ideology, tends to get personalised in leadership and when the latter speaks for religion while ignoring all reasoning, it becomes fundamentalism. Fundamentalism is not religion; it is the perversion of religion. **A** fundamentalist is one who considers his religion separate from others, claiming its superiority. He is the one who has faith in what he thinks to be the creed. Instead of a devotee of a religion (or a follower of an ideology), he becomes its spokesman, its prophet and wants all the rest to conform. He is a doctrinaire to the extent of an impositionist; he is an impositionist to the extent of a terrorist.

Fundamentalism, of any type, is extremism. It has, as its strength, **all** faith, and no reason; all hatred for others, and no compassion; all doctrinal conformity, and no Iove. In the name of religion (or say ideology) it does all that which is irreligious. It misinterprets the precepts and the original creed. It ill-educates the disciples.

The fundamentalist, of any type, is rigid, uncompromising and aggressive: he never listens, he only speaks; lie never follows, lie only guides; he, himself, becomes the teacher, the philosopher and the guide; he has more enemies than friends; he is secretive in his activities – more or less a misguided fellow.

Fundamentalism has its base, its means and its objectives. It base lies in untruth; its means are confined to violence, and its objectives are to let terror rule the world. It arises from time to time, but it has never seen victory and would never do so.

22.9 EXERCISES

1) Explain the meaning of fundamentalism. Who is a fundamentalist?

2) Do you think fundamentalism is confined only to religious faiths? If so, give arguments.

3) Discuss the relationship between ideology and fundamentalism. Bring out similarities between the two.

4) How does the mind of a fundamentalist work? Explain in detail.

5) Compare briefly the Hindu, Islamic and Christian fundamentalisms.

UNIT 23 NATIONALISM

Structure

23.1 Introduction

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- 23.2.1 National Identity

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23.6 Summary

23.7 Exercises

23.1 INTRODUCTION

Nationalism is an important social and political phenomenon that involves the making of nations and nation-states into a definable identity. it is a normative doctrine that embodies a particular set of assumptions and beliefs about politics. The essence of nationalism is a belief about the social bases of political authority. As a way of thinking about the world, it emphasizes the importance of nations in explaining historical developments and analyzing contemporary politics and also claims that 'national character' is a pervasive factor differentiating human beings.' It assures that all human beings should have one and only one nationality which should be their prime factor of identity and loyalty. Nationalism claims to represent the will of the people to be able to decide their own destiny, their will to be respected as people to develop their culture and personality. During the last two hundred years, nationalism has combined with the ideologies of liberalism, socialism and communism and emerged a winner. The national movements in the ex-colonial countries in the first half of the 20th century and the disintegration of the Soviet Union at its fag end revealed the powerful force of nationalism. Today, we live in a world where instead of peaceful multiculturalism, nations feel a constant threat of being annihilated. This is all the more important when in the context of globalization, there is an attempt to homogenize all communities. In this unit, we shall raise and answer these issues.

There are four main debates which have dominated the study of nationalism. They are:

i) I-low to define nationalism?

ii) When did tlie nation appear? The different theories of nationalism try to answer this question, though we do not find any final answers.

iii) Mow did the nations and nation-states historically evolve and developed and whether there is any marked difference between the development of nationalism in the western and the nun-western world?

iv) Recent challenges to nationalism in the form of ethnic resurgence and globalization,

23.2 WHAT IS NATIONALISM?

Nationalism is a compound of many factors, some of which have their roots in human nature arid many of which have a long history. Yet it is a modern phenomenon. To discover it is a difficult undertaking and to define it in succinct phrases is even more difficult. In one sense, it is the extension of'a group to which one belongs. In this sense, it is **a** fortn of collective egoism. In a negative sense, it is a manifestation of that fear of the 'stranger' with its roots deep in human nature. In the modern sense, it is born of that love of the familiar land and people wliich is often regarded as the core of patriotism. According to Hayes, nationalism has been used in many different ways and it is commonly used "to denote **a** condition of mind among members of'a nationality, perhaps already possessed of a national state, a condition of mind in which loyalty to the ideal or to the fact of a national state is superior to all other loyalties, and of which pride in one. A nationality and belief in its intrinsic excellence and its 'mission' are integral parts". Similarly, Hans Kohn defines nationalism as "state of mind ... striving to correspond to a political fact." On the otlier hand, Gellner writes, "Nationalism is primarily a political principle which holds that the political unit and the national unit should be congruent ... nationalist sentiment is a feeling of anger aroused by the violation of the principle, or tlie feel of satisfaction aroused by its fulfilment". Giddens points to the psychological character of nationalism "the affiliation of the individual to a set of symbols and beliefs, emphasizing commonality among the members of a particular community".

In short, nationalism has two aspects: i) tlie political character of nationalism as an ideology defending the notion that the state and the nation should be congruent, and ii) its capacity to be a provider of identity For individuals conscious of forming a group based upon a common past and culture and attachment to a concrete territory. The power of nationalism emanates from its ability to engender sentiments of belonging to a particular community. Symbols and rituals play a major role in the cultivation of a sense of solidarity among the people.

Thus, in order to understand the concept of nationalism, we must keep in mind that:

- nationalism is a sentiment that has to do with attachment to a common homeland, a common language, ideals, values and traditions, identifying a pal-titular group with symbols such as a flag, songs whicli define it as 'different' from others,

  how a sentiment of attachment to a homeland and a common culture can be transformed into the political demand for the creation of a state; how is it possible to make this transition?

A theory of nationalism has to deal with questions such as: how does nationalism use and legitimize the use of violence in its quest for the creation of a state; what is the role of national ideology; what is the role of the leaders in the national movement and how far can they contribute to the propagation of symbols and ideals.

- an important feature of nationalism is its capacity to bring together people from different social and cultural levels. Nationalism is not merely an invention of the ruling classes to maintain the unconditional loyalty of the masses, but also a tool to make them believe that they have much in common. This is one of the basic factors for understanding the persistence of nationalism.

23.2.1 . National. Identity

Apart from the definitions, another important aspect in the study of nationalism is what constitutes national identity, i.e. how an individual is able to attach himself with a particular community and thinks himself different from others. Hayes attributes seven factors for the rise of this national consciousness and identity: Iinguistics and literacy, political, commercial, economic, eccelesiastical, religious and cultural. Historically, kinship represented the first sign of identification and loyalty. The Middle Ages allowed the formation of a larger group attached to a concrete territory. Through the creation of markets, the intensification of trade, the waging of wars and tlie slow but progressive amplification of the state's scope, there emerged tlie formation of a community conscious of itself as different from others. It is at this stage that one can start talking of the emergence of nations and different national identities. According to Guibernau, broadly speaking, there are three factors which helped in the creation of a national identity: i) development of printing and creation of vernacular languages, ii) relationship between nation and culture, and iii) common symbols and rituals.

Tlie development of vernacular languages after the invention of the printing-press in Europe played a decisive role in creating a sense of belonging to a community. National consciousness is derived from shared values, traditions and memories within a particular culture and which are thought of and spoken in a particular language. Though the vernacular is not an indispensable basis for the creation of national consciousness, yet it does facilitate that creation. Where nation and state were co-extensive, education and the generalization of literacy not only reinforced the possibility of communication among the people, but also helped in the development of a strong sense of community. The development of English, French and German languages and education based upon the school system led to the creation of a strong national consciousness. When the state manages to impose a culture and language, it is 'nationalism which engenders nations'. If tlie state is successful, it manages to develop, apart from the political, a cornbination of several relationships such as economic, territorial, religious, linguistic and cultural. It is this state which creates a nation.

Secondly, the key question with regard to national identity is - who am I? Identity is an interpretation of the self that establishes what and where a person is, both socially and psychologically. Identity exists in societies which define and organize them. In the current era, the nation represents one of these communities. National identity is its product. The defining criteria of identity are: continuity over time and differentiation. While continuity lies in historical roots, differentiation stems from the consciousness of forming a community with a shared culture, attached to a concrete territory which distinguishes between members and 'strangers'. This identity fulfils three functions: i) it helps in making choices such as the right

to decide about their common political identity, ii) it makes the relationship possible with others because nation is a common pool in which individuals with a common culture live and work together, and iii) national identity gives strength and resilience to individuals to identify with an entity which transcends them. Now this identity is created through the development of a common culture i.e. values, beliefs, customs, conventions, habits and practices that are transmitted to the new members who receive the culture of a particular community. The process of identification with the elements of a specific culture implies a strong emotional investment. From the point of view of nationalism, a common culture favours the creation of a bond of solidarity among the members of a given community and allows them to image the community they belong to as separate and distinct from others.

Thirdly, in the creation of national identity, a powerful role is also played by symbols and rituals. The consciousness of forming a community is created through the use of symbols and repetition of rituals that give strength to the individual members of the community. By favouring occasions in which they feel united and by displaying symbols that represent this unity, a nation establishes its distinction from others. For example, a soldier does so for his flag because he identifies the flag with his country. Also, symbols like the flag have the power to evoke particular memories or feelings. This helps in the ability of nationalism to bind together people from different cultural levels and social background. Symbols mask differences and highlight commonality, creating a sense of group. And last but not the least, individuals who share the same culture, feel attached to a concrete land, have the experience of a common past and a project for the future, need to create occasions in which all that unites them is emphasized. In these moments, the individual forgets about himself and the sentiment of belonging to a group occupies the prime position. Through rituals, individuals are able to feel an emotion of unusual intensity that springs from their identification with the entity - the nation - which is above them and of which they are a part.

Thus, the force of nationalism springs not only from rational thought alone, but also from irrational power of emotions that stems from the feeling of belonging to a particular group. This double face of nationalism results from the way in which these emotions are either transformed into a peaceful and democratic movement seeking the recognition and development of one's nation or turned into xenophobia; i.e., the will to put one's nation above others and eradicate the differences.

23.3 THEORIES OF NATIONALISM

The most hotly debated question in the context of nationalism is when and how did the nation appear. In other words, whether national consciousness and sentiment is an evolutionary historical continuum or it is the result of modernism such as commercialization, industrialization, urbanization, mass participation in political culture etc. Different theories of nationalism try to answer this question, though we do not find a final answer. For the sake of study, these theories can be divided into two broad categories: 'Perennialism' and 'Modernism'. Perennialism concentrates on the history of nations which are described as ancient and immemorial. They see the nation as a cultural community, immemorial, rooted, organic (natural based on languages) seamless (i.e. they see society as a whole), and as a popular community that reflects the needs and ideals of the people. Ancestral ties and culture are of great importance to the advocates of this theory. On the other hand, modernists see the nation as a political community - modern, social construct and social creation, designed for an

age of revolution and mass mobilization. The nation is seen as a creation of the elite in order to control and influence the thought and actions of the masses. They see the nation as divided, different social groups representing religion, gender and class, having different needs and therefore, split into separate groupings. Let us have a look at these theories in detail:

A) **Perennial** Theories

- Primordialist
- Sociobiological

(B) **Modernization** Theories

- Social Communication Theories
- Economistic Theories - Marxist and Non-Marxist
- Political-Ideological Theories

23.3.1 Perennial Theories

23.3.1.1 Primordialist and Socio-Biological Theories

Among the perennial theories, we can refer to the primordial and the socio-biological perspectives. Primordialism assumes that group identity is given; that there exist in all societies certain primordial, irrational attachments based on blood, race, language, religion, region etc. They are, as Clifford Geertz writes, "ineffable and yet coercive ties, which are the result of a long process of crystallization". Modern states particularly but not exclusively, in the third world, are superimposed on the primordial realities which are the ethnic groups or communities. Primordialists believe that ethnic identity is deeply rooted in the historical experience of human beings to the point of being practically given. They believe that ethnic bonds are 'natural', fixed by the basic experiences that human beings undergo within tlieir family ties' and other primary groups. In short, according to Geertz, i) primordial identities are given or natural, ii) primordial identities are ineffable, that is, cannot be explained or analysed by referring to social interaction but are coercive, and iii) primordial identities deal essentially with the sentiments or affections.

The social biologists go a step further. This approach starts with the assumption that nationalism is the result of the extension of kin selection to a wider sphere of individuals who are defined in terms of putative or common descent. It insists that nationalism combines both rational and irrational elements; that is, a 'primitive mind' with modern techniques. The word nationalism expresses different realities: a love of country, the assertion of national identity and national dignity as well as the xenophobic obsession to obtain these things through violence and sacrifices, Nationalism buiIds on ethno-centrism towards the in-groups and xenophobia towards the out-groups. According to Shaw and Tuba, nationalism fosters pride, dignity and related sentiments among members of the in-group, thereby constituting a moral and philosophical basis on which to demand the political. It has its roots in the past, but it is a contemporary vehicle to vent out human propensities to war. It is important in this context to emphasize the psychological dimensions of nationalism. A bond is established between the individual and the nation based on the idea that the latter is a family writ large, the individual identifies with the nation and hence, prefers it to other nations. The extensive use of kin terms to refer to the nation reflects this psycho-affective reality that is called '*matripatriotic*' with an associated fraternal component.

23.3.2 Modernization Theories

Modernization theories of nationalism broadly assert that nationalism is a modern phenomenon and is the result of the process of transition from traditional to modern society. Some of these theories focus more specifically on the spread of industrialization and the socio-economic, political and cultural conditions functionally associated with it as the main cause for the development of nationalism. The ideological roots of modernization are found in Renaissance, Scientific Revolution and the Enlightenment. At the economic level, modernization was brought about by the development of commerce and then, the process of industrialization. At the political level, it implied the appearance of the modern nation-state - a centralized, bureaucratic, territorial sovereign polity. When applied to lion-western societies, some features of modernity such as commercialization, bureaucratization, secularization, urbanization, mass communication, literacy may be present while industrialization is often absent.

Modernization theories ofnationalism come under different forms. Let us study them in detail.

23.3.2.1 Social Communication Theories (Deutsch, Rustow, Rokkan and Anderson)

A pioneering study on the effects of modernization on nationalism was Karl Deutsch's *Nationalism and Social Communication.* I-lere, he deals with the growth of nations and nationalism in the context of transition from traditional to modern societies. Deutsch emphasized the centrality of communication in the making of national communities. He defines nation as a 'group of people who communicate more effectively and intensely with one another than with people outside the group'. I-Ie focuses on the development of internal communications within the state as leading to the creation o f a common sense of moral and political identity. As he says, 'in the political and social struggles of modern age, nationality means an alignment of large number of individuals from the middle and lower classes linked to regional centres and leading social groups by channels of social communication and economic intercourse, both indirectly from link to link and directly with the centre'. By using a variety of data from economics, history and demography, Deutsch pointed out that massive social mobilization which went along with the process of commercialization, industrialization and urbanization as well as with the growth of general literacy and mass communication were responsible for the growth of nationalism.

Another writer who has established a link between modernization and nationalism is the American political scientist Dankwart Rustow. In his book *A World of Nations,* he writes that 'the essential link between modernization and nationalism consists of course in the need for an intensive division of labour'. Other key features such as equality and loyalty have also been essential to the nation that emerged from the modernization process. Modernization and nationhood are closely related and the most appropriate political structure to achieve advanced modernization is the nation-state.

Another scholar Stein Rokkan has proposed a *longue duree* which places some important variables in the medieval and early modern periods. In the modern situation, he accounts for the accelerated nation building in the nineteenth and twentieth centuries by reference to six factors: i) combination of rural and urban resources, ii) spread and localization of industrialization, iii) pressure towards centralization and unification of the state, iv) pull of imperialist tendencies. v) tension between centre and periphery during the course of ethnic/ linguistic mobilization, and vi) the conflict between the state and the church.

Yet another important writer Benedict Anderson in his book *Imagined Communities* emphasizes the issue of social communication in the early period of the development of nationality. According to him, national consciousness was made possible with the breakdown of three defining characteristics of pre-modern period: sacred scripts, divine kingship, and conflation of history with cosmology. Anderson defines nation as an 'imagined political community' (imagined as both limited and sovereign). His argument about the origin of nationalism leads to the focus on the tremendous impact of print capitalism. The book was the first commodity produced in a massive way. I nis was one area in which early capitalism using the new technology of production was able to make great profits. The effect of print language was felt on national consciousness by the means of creation of a unified language which allowed a sizeable part of the population to rea the same test and identify with each other. Further, by giving fixity to language, it was possible to develop the idea of the antiquity of one's nation. According to Anderson, what made the new communities imaginable was a half-conscious, but explosive interaction between a system of production and productive relations (capitalism), a technology of communication and the type of fatality of human linguistic diversity. At a later stage in history, state consolidation both at home and in the colonies created groups of people who felt politically and culturally excluded and by imagining themselves as communities were able to shake off alien rule.

23.3.2.2 Economistic Theories

Economism is an extremely popular form of explanation and as such is favoured by both the Marxists and the non-Marxists alike. In modern literature, this explanatory fr mework appears in different forms, but in the final analysis the common denominator is that both deny the specificity of the nation state. The starting point of the economic conception of nation is that national consciousness is fundamentally a false consciousness and it can be used to justify or hide economic exploitation as well as political power and cultural supremacy.

Marxist theories envisage nationalism as a modern phenomenon and posit a more or less explicit causal connection between tlie development of capitalism and the appearance of nationalism. For Karl Marx, nations and states need to be studied and evaluated within the context and from the perspective of their place in class relations and in the class struggle occurring on the global scale. For him nationalism was an expression of bourgeois interest. But the bourgeois 'fatherland' did not refer to the country's potentialities for progress or to the nation regarded democratically, but to tlie aggregate of institutions, customs and laws and ideas which sanctify the right to property on a considerable scale. For Marx and Engles, the nation was not a central category of social existence, but a transitory institution created by the bourgeoisie; hence, the famous sentence, 'The proletariat has no fatherland'.

However, Marx and Engles were well aware of tlie nationalist phenomenon. As politically committed intellectuals, they lived through the troublesome 1840s, 'a period in which nationalist struggles ravaged the European arena'. In their formative years, they therefore had to confront the nationalist demands of a variety of European people. To understand their attitude towards nationalism, it is essential to know that they subordinated the survival of nations to the progressive march of history: some people were fossils from a long gone past and were, therefore. objectively counter-revolutionary. These reactionary nations had to be sacrificed at the altar of the mightier national states. Though in some articles, they presented the national question as a part of tlie political scenario, there was no attempt to explain tlie phenomenon except perhaps in terms of crude stereotypes of national character.

Marx did not present a theory of nationalism for three main reasons. First, according to him, tlie prevailing ideas of society in any epoch are the ideas of the ruling classes. Hence, the spread of ideas (such as that of nationalism) depended heavily upon tlie distribution of economic power in society. Secondly, Mars":; understanding of history as a history of class struggle implied that a proletarian revolution should follow a bourgeois one and impose a dictatorship of the proletariat on the road towards a communist society. The stateless society of Marx had no room for nationalism since nationalism's main aim was the establishment of a state and not its abolition. Thirdly. Marx did not give attention to nationalism because he felt tliat neither capitalist relations of production, nor nationality, religion, etc. should obstruct the liberation of people as human beings. The proletariat should transcend national identities and be able to recognize itself as a part of the big family of mankind.

However, by the turn of the century, the vindication of tlie rights of tlie nations changed tlie Marxist view on the national question. In the Second International, the national question was central in tlie political agenda. Within the Austro- Marxist tradition, a serious attempt was made to come to terms with the theoretical problems posed by the category of nation. Otto Bauer presented a theory of nationalism based on tlie idea of national character and national culture, though lie also used the dubious idea tliat nations have a historical destiny to fulfil. A more influential delinition of nationalism was given by Stalin. In *Marxism and the National Question,* lie emphasized the simultaneous coalescence of four elements (language, territory, economic life and psychic formation) in an historically constituted community of culture. Lenin adopted a more flexible definition of the nation, and although he was like most Marxists in favour of the creation of large political units, yet lie endorsed the principle of self-determination of oppressed nations, at least in theory.

In the 1970s, a number of attempts were made to evolve a tlieory of nation along modified Marxist lines. Most prominent among them are the following three: i) *Internal Colonialism* ii) *Uneven Development* and iii) *World System.*

The theory of internal colonialism has been developed by Michael Hechter in his book *Internal Colonialism.* In a nutshell, it is based on the idea that the modern states exhibit strong internal inequalities based on ethnic lines (such as the Indians in Latin America, the Blacks in the USA and among the Scots. the Welsh and the Irish). Industrialization aggravated an already existing situation of economic dependency and inequality within the states, which manifests itself first in different political behaviour and later in ethno-national movements. He believes that in each country there is a region which is favoured by capitalist development while others are subordinated. Also, Hechter pointed out that instead of national culture, what we have is a core culture which dominates over others by establishing ethnic boundaries. In other words, a cultural division of labour also exists between tlie core and the periphery; that is, there developed a system of stratification by means of which the dominant group at the core is in a position to monopolize social positions which have a high prestige in society, while the members of tlie peripheral cultures are assigned social roles which were considered inferior. The more industrialization advanced in its uneven way, the internal differences became more accentuated, and ethno-nationalism emerged as a response to a situation of perceived dependence and exploitation.

An illuminating account of nationalism from the Marxist point of view has been given by Tom Nairn in his book *The Break up of Britain.* Nairn understands nationalism as a product of uneven development of regions within the world capitalist economy. He refers to nationalism

as an effect of the expansion of capitalism. Though agreeing that Marxism has little to offer on nationalism, Nairn insists that only by focusing on the ravages and contradictory effects of uneven development could we hope to understand nationalism. Capitalism has unified mankind but at a price of great disequilibrium and tremendous antagonism which has triggered a process of socio-political fragmentation, affecting even the old continent. Nationalism was the result of certain aspects of the global political economy in the modern era; it was a way that peripheral countries found to defend themselves against the core. This was done by inter-class mobilization on the basis of an identity different from that of the dominating state. Nationalism had of necessity to express itself through the cultural peculiarities of each area. In conclusion, for Nairn, nationalism was the socio-historical cost of the accelerated implantation of capitalism at the world level.

In the wealth of writings that Emmanuel Wallerstein has dedicated to the world system, he has occasionally touched upon the national question. Wallerstein insists on the invented or constructed character of the nation. According to him, 'the nation hinges around one of the basic structural features of the world economy', that is 'the politic superstructure of this historical system, the sovereign states that form and derive from the 'inter-state system'. A nation derives from the political structuring of the world system. In other words, statehood preceded nationhood. The nation is 'in no sense a primordial stable social reality, but a complex clay like historical production of the capitalist world economy'.

Another original Marxist approach to nationalism has been expounded by Miroslav Hroch. In his book *Social Preconditions of National Revival in Europe*, he has proposed a class analysis of the modern nation as well as the role of cultural development. He distinguishes three main states in the development of modern society: i) an early period in which the transition from feudalism to capitalism took place. This stage comprised of the fight against absolute monarchies and the starting of bourgeois revolutions; ii) the second stage coincided with the victory and consolidation of capitalism as well as the appearance of an organized working class movement; and iii) during the 20th century, there is a process of world wide integration and unprecedented development of mass communication. At a cultural level, each nationalist movement runs through three phases: i) the period of scholarly interest, ii) period of patriotic agitation and iii) period of mass movement.

However, the Marxist tradition generally has been extremely suspicious of nationalism, though for tactical reasons they have often made use of national sentiments to achieve socialist objectives. In conclusion, one can agree with Tom Nairn that 'the theory of nationalism represents Marxism's great historical failure'. The developments in the 1960s in which socialist countries fought bitterly against each other along nationalist lines opened the eyes of some Marxists to the reality of national interest. With the collapse of the Soviet Block in 1989 and the disintegration of the USSR in 1991, this issue has come to the forefront again. At present, few really believe that Marxism can provide a genuine theory of nationalism.

23.3.2.3 Gellner's Theory of Nationalism

Though Gellner's theory is not an economic one and A.D. Smith has labelled it as cultural and linguistic, still he maintains that nationalism is the unavoidable outcome of an industrial society which requires a specially ductile labour force. Gellner does not use the word 'capitalism' and uses instead 'industrial society'. According to him, nationalism can be understood in the context of the impact of industrialization, of the competition between classes

in the newly created industrial stratification and of the integrating effects of language and education. The process of industrialization undermined the traditional social structures and gave primacy to cultural elements such as communication. The identity of an individual was no longer defined in terms of his social relations, but in terms of his culture. And culture and nationality are closely related. Only the state could provide through an educational system and the official language the kind of cultured person required by the process of industrialization. The fact that industrialization and modernization spread in an uneven fashion created a new system of social stratification; a class system which was felt to be unacceptable because of its illegitimacy. If this overlaps with cultural differences, an uneasy alliance between a culturally displaced intelligentsia and an overexploited proletariat may lead to a nation's secession. According to him, it was the social chasms (doubled with cultural differences) created by early industrialism and by the unevenness of its diffusion which made the nationalist conflicts acute. Thus, the specific roots of nationalism are found in the distinctive structural requirements of industrial society.

The Gellnerian model of nationalist development strongly emphasized that nationalism has its roots in the new industrial order and that nothing before this period - i.e. agrarian society - can be equated to nationalism, because political units were not defined in terms of cultural boundaries. Since for Gellner nations can only be defined in terms of the age of nationalism, he cannot conceive of the nation as an imaginative vision created by intellectuals in order to legitimize tlie medieval (agrarian) state (monarchy) in Western Europe. His other emphasis is on modernization in the form of popitlation explosion, rapid urbanization, labour migration, penetration of local economies by global economy etc. He also admits that the Protestant Reformation must have had an impact on nationalism as did colonialism and imperialism.

23.3.2.4 Political-Ideological Thearies

Apart from the economistic theories, there are a number of politico-ideological theories of nationalism. The common feature of all these theories is that they give a prominent role to the state in tlie development of nationalism in modernity. Under these theories, we shall dwell upon the views of four authors; namely, John Breuilly, Anthony Giddens, Paul Brass and Michael Mann.

John Breuilly in his book *Nationalism and State* accepts the existence of nations and nationalist sentiments in medieval Europe, but he restricts nationalism to the modern period and associates it with the development of modern state and of the international state system. Nationalism is understood as a form of politics that arises in close association with the development of the state. In other words, in all its history, tlie modern state has shaped nationalist politics. Giddens defines nationalism as 'the existence of symbols and beliefs which are either propagated by elite groups or held by many of tlie members of regional, ethnic or linguistic categories of a population and which imply a community between them'. Nationalism for Giddens is a modern phenomenon stemming from the aftermath of the French revolution. He also insists that the European nationalism is a category of it own and that it should not be generalized to other areas without reference to what he calls 'world time'. Nationalism was a response to certain 'needs and dispositions' which would appear at a time when as a result of the mass commoditification of time and space, the individual lost his ontological security. Simultaneously, he also agrees that nationalism is connected with class domination and that the uneven development of capitalism strongly influenced the origin of oppositional nationalism.

Another writer Paul Brass insists that ethnicity and nationalism are the product of modcrnity and emphasizes its constructed character. According to him, cultures are fabricated by elite groups who use raw materials from different groups to create ethnics and nations. By using these representations, the elite aim at ensuring their economic or political advantages for themselves. Brass's theory states that ethnic identity and modern nationalism arise out of specific types of interaction between the leadership of centralizing states and the elites from non-dominant ethnic groups, especially but not exclusively on the peripheries of those states.

Michael Mann sees himself as a modernist, although he accepts the existence of more or less conscious ethnicity and proto-nations before modern times. To account for the development of nationalism, it is necessary to refer to all the four sources of social powers; namely, economic, political, ideological and military. In the first phase which began in the 16th century, ideological power dominated. It was in the shape of religion and it gave form to proto-nations like Protestant England. The second phase commenced in 1700 and it can be defined as a 'commercial statist' phase; it was characterized by a further diffusion of' proto-national identities, It roughly corresponded to Anderson's idea of 'print capitalism'. In tlie third phase, military power dominated and propelled nationhood. By tlie beginning of the 19th century, most of the western nations were already in full sight. Finally, the industrialist phase of the nation encouraged three types of nations: state reinforcing, state creating and state subverting. According to Mann, nationalism appeared heavily mediated by the role of the state. Industrialization was not the principal cause of nationalism; in fact it arrived too late. According to Mann, there were two principal causes: on the one hand, the emergence of commercial capitalism and its universal social classes, and on tlie other, the emergence of modern state and its professional armed forces and administrators. Conjoined by the fiscal-military pressure exerted by geopolitical rivalry, they produced tlie politics of popular representation and these formed several varieties of modern nationalism.

In short, nationalism is a modem phenomenon though its rise has been ridden with a complexity of factors.

23.4 RISE AND GROWTH OF NATIONALISM

Historically, nationalism lias been the product of the rise of nation-states in Europe. During its earlier phase, it was identified with the absolute monarchies of Europe. In the 18th and the 19th centuries, it acquired an imperialist form in the struggle for colonies in Asia and Africa; in the 19th century it associated itself with liberalism, democracy, constitutionalist and civil liberties. It played an important part in the reorganization of Europe, unification of Italy and Germany and tlie liquidation of Hapsburg and Ottoman Empires. After the First World War, it acquired an aggressive and racial shape in the form of fascism. During the 20th century, it brought a new awakening in the Asian and African countries, through national liberation movements. After the cold war, tlie disintegration of the Soviet Union and the rise of a number of new states has once again shown the domination of nationalism as a political force.

Nationalism has found expression through the medium of modern nation-states which were the product of many forces and struggles. The principle factors responsible for the rise of nationalist states have been as follows:

i) the individualistic climate ofopinion that characterized Renaissance and Refonnation

ii) the collapse of universal authority of the Church

iii) the desire of the rising commercial classes for uniform trade regulations, abolition of feudal obstacles to trade for creating conditions under which trade could be carried on peacefully and profitably

iv) the desire for peace, order and security in an age marked by bloodslied and violence

v) personal ambitions of monarchs who allied themselves with rising commercial classes in opposition to the more powerful feudal lords

vi) the doctrine ofterritorial sovereignty which provided the kings the most convenient weapon to combat the claims of rivals or religious authorities. The idea of one unified legal system affording order, consistency and certainty in the governing of all social relations within a given national area made a very strong appeal.

Based upon the above factors, the growth of states on nationalistic lines started from England and Western Europe and spread to different continents and region. To have a clear understanding of the phenomenon, we can study it under the following headings:

i) Growth of the nation-state in Wcstcrn, Southern and Eastern Europe

ii) Nation-state in America

iii) Anti-colonial nationalism in Asia and Africa

23.4.1 Nation-state in Europe

As stated above, the nation-state was the product of combined influence of Reformation, Renaissance and commercial revolution. The decline in the authority of the church raised the question of loyalty of the individual and by withdrawing this loyalty from the Holy Roman Empire, gave it to the monarch who was emerging as the symbol and sole representative of the nation itself. These monarchies tended to consolidate their power in areas united by a common vernacular, religion, culture etc. Thus, nationality began to form into a state which represented them. As a result, a new principle was introduced in the concept of the nation-state. This concept rejected the I-loly Roman Empire and supported the formation of states on the basis of nationality.

Loyalty to a nation represented by a king began to emerge and exert powerful influence. The English, French, Spanish and German nationalities were there even before, but the bond had been religion. The breaking of church power and the establishment of the national church wider the authority of the king paved the way for the nation-state. The task was initiated by England and was followed by France. Henry VII and Philips II were absolute monarchs who destroyed feudalism and the multiplicity of authority in society and established strong centralized states. Thus, there emerged a separate and independentnational identity represented by a powerful king. This state freed the individual from the dual loyalty of the church and the state. During this phase, nation-state meant the submission of the individual to the king representing the nationality of the ruled.

This period was also characterized by a new development i.e. colonialism. It spread both in eastern and western directions, i.e. Asia and America. The great discoveries were the achievements of adventurous individuals, supported by kings who in turn expected financial gains. The increasing competition among the nation-states to maximize colonies led to further centralization and solidarity within the nation and intensification of the spirit of nationalism. The new colonies were not intended to be territorially subjugated or ruled from abroad, but were to serve as centres of commerce in tlie initial phase and as a source of raw materials and market in the era of industrial revolution. The industrial revolution gave birth to a new economy and a new class — the capitalist class, whose interests clashed with those ofabsolute monarchy. The struggle between the kings and the capitalist class was resolved through democracy. This gave a new meaning to the nation-state. Now, nation-state meant not loyalty to the king, but to the government which gave freedom, which consulted the people and placed real authority in their hands. Nationalism was meaningless, unless it embodied liberty for the people. The establishment of representative institutions gave a new solid base to the ideology of nationalism.

The French revolution in the fag end of the 18th century was a turning point in the rise and growth of the nation-state. Here, the stage shifted to central Europe. The declaration of the national assembly, rights of man, location of sovereignty in the nation, abolition of feudal legacies, confiscation of church property to meet the national debt, formation of the national education policy, the-national flag, the national anthem, and the war fought for the glory c the nation — all these thing led nationalism in France to its pinnacle. In 1792 when Napoleon Bonaparte began the national revolutionary struggles, national consciousness was almost absent in Europe. But as the national wars increased and a large portion of Belgium, Netherlands, Germany and Italy came under French occupation, it led to a reaction which found expression in nationalism. There was an upsurge in German nationalism. The defeat of Germany in 1806 made Fichte and Hegel staunch enemies of France and ardent supporters of German nationalism. It led to the belief that politics cannot be ignored at the cost of philosophy. The Nepoleonic wars helped immensely in awakening the national consciousness of the German State. The German State wanted to stand at an equal level with France and England. Fichte held the view that economic progress was the basis of political unity and this could be achieved only through state socialism. The concept of nation as propounded by Hegel, the state socialism of Lassale and Bismark had its roots in Fichte. In Germany, the nation-state was not only a political theory, but emerged as a philosophy of life. Hegel combined the state with the will of the nation. He called the state as the march of God on earth and by giving a mystical base to the nation, justified an absolute state which was misused by Nazism in the 20th century in the name of national socialism.

The formation of nation-state in Eastern Europe did not take place under a centralized authority. Right from the beginning, due to the lack of any political organization to spread national consciousness, these states were under three empires — Hapsburg. Ottoman and Asian. All these empires were unable to inculcate any national sentiment among the population. In the 19^{th} century, socio-economic changes in the rest of Europe had their repercussions on the eastern parts as well. Various segments of the population begin to feel that from the point of view of nationality, they were not only different from the king, but that the oppressive nature of rule was also not tolerable. The theory of self-determination of nationalities was welcomed by these people because this could help them rid themselves of autocratic regimes. Hence, the struggle to get rid of oppressive rule started in the 19th century and continued in the 20th century. During tlie First World War, a major question was of the new nationalities which

wanted to form new states of their own. The war decided in favour of the nation-states. The map of Europe was redrawn. The Austro-Hungarian empires and the Ottoman empires were broken. Five new states were carved out: Poland, Czechoslovakia, Lithuania, Estonia and Finland. Six new states were extended: Yugoslavia, Romania, Greece, Italy Denmark and France. The Austrian, Hungarian and Turkish empires were pruned to form states based upon nationalities. The Treaty of Paris accepted the principle of nationalities as a part of universal law in Europe. The First World War recommended the idea of self-determinationof nationalities to be extended to Asia and Africa.

23.4.2 Nation-state in America

While in Europe, the nation state meant a unified state on the basis of mutual freedom and its defence, it meant something different in America. The American colonies felt that all their efforts and conquests had led to the riches of the home countries. When they became conscious that they were not working for themselves, but for the benefit of those who had never left their comfortable homes, they revolted. Their first slogan was 'no taxation without representation' which subsequently changed into full war of independence. This resulted in the formation of new states and national identities. Out of the contradiction between national feeling and liberty, and self-interest, they were forced to severe old bonds and create new ones. Hence, the nation-state meant severing old national bonds and creating new ones. This ended the colonial rule and the creation of many nation-states in the American continent.

23.4.3 Anti-Colonial Nationalism

In the 20th century, the period between the two world wars, the Russian Revolution and the rise of' Fascism were important landmarks in the spread of nationalist ideas from Europe to the non-european lands of Asia, Africa and Latin America. Collectively, they set in motion the process of national liberation movements in Asia and Africa, as a result of which many countries got independence from the imperialist powers of Europe. Such revolutionary changes played a vital role in developing a new form of nationalism. New nations like China, India, Pakistan, Egypt, Vietnam grew on the world scene which gave a new meaning to the concept of nationalism. The circumstances which gave birth to these nations were quite different from those of the West. These were the countries which were subjugated by imperialist countries like England, France. Spain, Holland etc and their economies had been exploited. Imperialist countries considered them their private property which they sold and pilfered. They destroyed their independence and preserved puppet governments which were too weak to do any harm to imperialism.

A new form of nationalism and a new meaning of the concept was born in countries like India, China and the Arab lands. Though the new concept o f nationalism which became the basis of new states derived much of its ideology and political theory from the West, yet it adapted the theory to its own historical experiences, its particular circumstances and to its own revolt against imperialism. The basis of the new nationalism was that it began with an instinctive and xenophobic hatred for imperialism, a hatred of its representatives, its nationals and anyone affiliated with them. It was a simple hatred against those who had occupied their lands by force, exploited their riches by force, crushed their governments, enslaved their people and who had not hesitated to destroy, plunder and steal. This hatred was expressed violently in

killings, destruction and assassinations such as the Boxer Rebellion in South Africa as well as in peaceful, non-violent forms in India under Gandhi. These states were conscious of imperialism, aimed at its destruction and the destruction of accompanying evils such as conquests, oppression, enslavement, stifling of liberty, exploitation of riches and sowing of racial, regional, communal and class distinctions. At the same time, nationalism here was also a creative force which aimed at building a nation based upon the principles of liberty, independence, economic justice and national unity. It viewed national unity as a creative force which could stimulate the people to contribute their share in national reconstruction. This unity meant two things: i) unity of geographical parts, and ii) unity in the diversity of religion, class, caste, and communal elements. These states pledged to work for the welfare of all classes, castes and groups because all of them participated and contributed their lot in the struggle for fi-eedom. From tlie international point of view, these nation-statesopposed military bases, undue alien interference into the affair of other states, apartheid and believed in non-alignment and international cooperation.

A peculiar feature of anti-colonial nationalism has been that in most cases, there is no sense in which a nation precedes the emergence of the state. Here, a difference can be made between the initial form of nationalism as a movement directed against the colonial rulers and engaged in the struggle for independence and nationalism's subsequent transformation into a political discourse employed by new leaders in their attempt to construct a nation capable of sustaining the legitimacy of the state they inherited from the colonial era. After gaining independence, these colonial states established new (constituent) states, drew their borders, built up their capital cities and established a central administration and political institutions to suit their economic needs. As a result, each colony was a 'collection of peoples and old states, or fragments of these, brought together within the same boundaries'. All these states were a mosaic of different ethnic communities and tribes. Thus, the artificial and imposed character of the states in such territories accounted for most of the troubles after obtaining independence. The major problem faced by these states has been their fragility. The newly created nation-states initiated a struggle to replace tlie pre-national ties with a feeling of national identity and loyalty. But in many cases, the euphoria accompanying the celebration of freedom soon turned sour. The reasons for this stem from the incapacity of the new states to eliminate economic backwardness and the difficulty of creating a coherent civil society out of a population as heterogeneous in itself as in relation to the state. Many of them unable to sustain the claims of the people turned towards the USA or the erstwhile USSR. But this meant becoming dependent.

Also, independence liberated ethnic nationalism within the emergent slate nationalism and in some cases — like India, Pakistan, Malaysia, Indonesia, Nigeria etc — threatened anti-colonialism nationalism whose objective was the conservation of the state and the replacement of the colonial rulers. While Muslims called for a separate nation-statechallenging the integrity of the Indian state, caste, class, ethnic origin, religion, language formed separate layers of identity that added to the complexity of creating a single nation within an inherited arbitrarily designed state. After independence, enormous problems were faced in preserving the nation-state. The socio-political environment elevated some leaders like Gandhi, Nehru, Sukarno, Nasscr to the category of prophet liberators. Yet, the vast gap between the Western educated elites and the bulk of a mostly illiterate population increased after independence. Most of them did not change the structure of the states and retained colonizers' privileges. The fragility of their governments led to an increasing hostility as well as movements seeking independence of ethnic minorities within established states. Independence brought civil war in Sudan, Zaire,

Chad, Nigeria, Kenya, Ghana, Ceylon and a rift between Eastern and Western wings of Paltistan ultimately resulting in the creation of Bangladesh – a new nation-state.

The major task confronted by the nationalist intellectuals has been to ***create*** a *nation* ***to*** *legitimize* the slate. But given the heterogeneous character of their societies, conflict is unavoidable which stems from two sources: i) the differences arising among the ethnic groups included in the most arbitrarily'created states inherited from the colonial rulers, and ii) the wide gap between a small affluent elite and a large number of people living in conditions of poverty. In the first case, nationalism is employed as a weapon to ignite old antagonisms and disputes, and in the second case, it could be used to promote an alternative image of the nation or channelled to blame the West for all the troubles.

23.5 CONTEMPORARY DEVELOPMENTS: NATIONALISM VIS-A-VIS ETHNIC RESURGENCE AND GLOBALIZATION

Since the Second World War, three developments have affected the concept of nationalism which has been pointing to different directions. The first was a consolidation trend which made the nation-state the main source of political authority. Tlie domination of the nation-state, the most powerful form of political organisation, has been extended by the virtual end of the colonial empires. There were 51 states in 1945 whereas by 1992, this number had gone up to 185. Moreover, the power of the national governments in many new states, though shaky in the beginning, has been consolidated in the 1970s and 1980s, particularly in third world countries like Zaire, Nigeria, Malaysia and Pakistan. The coming up of India illustrates one of the great virtues of the nation-state as a form of organization which can secure mass compliance of policies with only a minimum of coercion.

The second development relates to ethnic resurgence. Alongwith the consolidation of the nation state, there has been a revival of minority nationalist movements claiming measures of autonomy within the state or even independence from it. Such conflicting trends have increased since the 1970s when the UK saw the growth of nationalist parties in Scotland and Wales, France experienced demands for measures of cultural autonomy from groups in Britain and Corsica. Quebecois nationalists wanted independence from Canada, More recently, India and Sri Lanka are also facing problems of Kashmiri and Tamil nationalists respectively, leading to a certain amount of bloodslied. After the disintegration of the USSR and the East Europe Communist bloc, ethnic resurgence has spread like an infection. The rise of separatist and ethnic agitations is partly due to the loss of group identity ofcertain minorities and partly, due to the fact that the principle of state creation since the Second World War had nothing to do with self-determination. The creation of new nation-states was more because of the forces of decolonization, revolution or intervention of outside powers. The result was that soon after independence, tensions developed between the component parts of the independence movement in countries like India, Algeria. Again the intervention of outside powers had been obviously non-nationalistic. The split of Soviet Union into its constituents' parts and the disintegration of Yugoslavia hnve shown that these states were imperfectly integrated. The third development relates to the process of globalization. During the last two decades, the world has become highly inter-dependent. Today, the nation-state has to operate in an inter-dependent world. Information, money, weapons, technology, pollution, values, radiation, food, computers, drugs, disease, data — all flow rapidly around the globe giving the individual nation-states more

opportunities, but also posing more threat to-their identity. Simultaneously, the role of international and supranational organizations like the UNO, the World Bank, the International Monetary Fund, GATT and Non-governmental Organizations is increasing by leaps and bounds. In this connection, the past two decades have seen the emergence of a good deal of speculation about the possible transmutation of the nation-state system into some kind of a new world order. The crucial question is whether wc are moving towards a common culture or whether globalization will strengthen a particular culture. Hobsbawm predicts that the future is not going to be contained within the limits of 'nation-states' either politically, economically, culturally or linguistically. It will be supranational. It will see nation-states or nations in the being resisting, adapting or being absorbed or dislocated by the new supranational restructuring of the globe. On the other hand, according to Birth, much of such speculation is based upon wishful thinking. Inspite of globalization and the quest for global culture, the current proliferation of struggles for self-determination in several parts of the world indicate that even the democratic nature of the nation-states and granting sufficient autonomy to the minorities within a nation-state has not solved the problem and the use of force still remains the key feature in the definition of nationalism. The role of nationalism as a mass movement has played a crucial role in the conscription of large armies and in tlie waging of war. Currently, nationalism appeals to a wide ranging sector of population and stands as a dynamic agent that relies on violence as well as promotes peaceful mass mobilization.

In the context of globalization, the reluctance to give away sovereignty and loss of control over domestic matters will increase the presence of nationalism in the nation-states' political discourse. Here, a growth of contradictory forces can be seen: on the one hand, to participate in international forums and institutions and the search for the establishment of common policies with other members of the world community, and on the other, to protect the interests of the nation-state. For example. the European Union has not reduced the preservation of the integrity and identity of the individual nation-states.

Contemporary nationalism uses tradition in the services of modernity. According to Touraine, the nation is a 'non—modern actor that creates modernity.' Doubts and fragmentation are eminent in modernity because they are unexpected. The absence of a single officially sanctioned method of knowledge reflected a certain kind of fragmentation that differs from the one present in our time. The return to tradition emphasizes the value of continuity in a context where constant change and adaptation to new social, political and technological environments determines the day-to-day life of the individuals. The concept of nation is rooted in pre-modern times and the perception of culture and language as products of the evolvement of a community over a period of time will retain their strong power to attract the individuals. Tradition will continue to be involved as a legitimizing principle only in so far as it is constantly actualized. The new elements brought about by modernity will be incorporated into and mixed with the traditional forms of life.

Globalization unleashes a pressing demand or identity among those individuals who regard the totality of inherited ideas, values, beliefs and knowledge that constitute the shared basis of their lives its threatened by the expansion of alien cultures endowed with greater resources. In many cases, nationalism emerges as a response to progressive homogenization and represents a struggle to defend identity politics. Thus, though the process of globalization is intensifying, there-is no global identity which would suit to fulfil the needs of an otherwise diverse population. Thus, nationalism will survive the wave of globalization.

23.6 SUMMARY

The above discussion on nationalism can be summed up as follows:

Nationalism is a sentiment that has to do with the attachment to a homeland, a common language, ideas, values and traditions, identification of a group with symbols such as flags, songs etc. which make it 'different' from others. The attachment creates an identity and the appeal to that identity has a past and the power to mobilize the people.

One of the most distinctive features of nationalism is its capacity to bring people together from different 'social and cultural levels', It is the invention of the ruling classes to maintain the unconditional loyalty of the masses and make them believe that they have much in common with the ruled. This is one of the basic factors in understanding the persistence of nationalism.

A theory of nationalism has to deal with questions such as the concept of nationalism and the factors responsible for the evolvement of national consciousness and national identity; the genesis and evolution of the idea of nation in Western Europe, its diffusion world-wide; and the contemporary challenges to nationalism.

The different theories of nationalism discussed in this unit try to solve the mystery as to when the nation first appeared. The perennial theories concentrate on the history of nations which are described as ancient and immemorial. They see the nation as a cultural community, rooted, organic, natural and as a single whole. The modernist theories, whether social, communication based, economistic or politico-ideological, see the nation as a political community, a modern and social construct designed for an age of revolution. They associate nationalism with movements like Renaissance, Reformation, commercialization, industrialization, urbanization as well as colonialism arid imperialism.

I-listorically, the idea of nation-state began in England, followed by Western Europe such as France, Germany and Italy. The formation of nation-state in Eastern Europe led to the dissolution of three empires: Hapsburg, Ottoman arid Asian which resulted in the creation of a number of states such as Poland, Czechoslovakia, Lithuania, Latvia, Romania etc. The American Revolution created a new kind of nationalism which meant severing old bonds and creating new ones. During the 20th century, anti-colonial nationalism in Asia and Africa began with an instinctive and xenophobic hatred of imperialism, colonialism, racism, apartheid etc. The post Second World War period saw the triumph of nationalism and the right of self-determination of nationalism. This gave rise to a number of new nation-states in Asia and Africa.

Since the Second World War, three developments have affected nationalism: consolidation, fragmentation and globalization. Up to 1970, many states which had gained freedom after the Second World War had been able to consolidate their position. But along with that, there had becn a revival of minority national movements and ethnic resurgence, both in tlie advanced countries like the UK, Canada, France and also in underdeveloped countries like India and Sri Lanka. And last but not the least, the process of globalization has been posing a serious threat to the national identity of the states, 1-lowever, nationalism has been able to meet all these challenges and still remains the dominant force in the world.

23.7 EXERCISES

1) Explain in your own words what do you understand by nationalism.

2) Discuss the factors responsible for giving rise to a national identity.

3) Which are the two broad categories of theories of nationalism? Explain.

4) Enumerate the various theories of nationalism.

5) Explain any two nationalism theories of your choice.

6) Explain the factors behind the rise and growth of nationalism.

7) Write a short essay on anti-colonial nationalism.

8) Discuss contemporary developments in the arena of nationalism.

UNIT 24 MULTICULTURALISM

Structure

24.1 Multiculturalism: The Concept

24.1.1 The Ideal of Non-Discrimination

24.1.2 Protecting Cultural Diversity

24.1.3 Multiculturalism, Pluralism and Diversity

24.2 Multiculturalism and Liberalism

24.2.1 Critique of Liberal Democracies

24.2.2 Multiculturalism as a Liberal Theory of Minority Rights

24.3 The Idea of Differentiated Citizenship

24.3.1 Different Kinds of Special Rights

24.3.2 Differentiating Between Minorities

24.4 Critiques of Multiculturalism

24.5 Multiculturalism: An Assessment

24.6 Summary

24.7 Exercises

24.1 MULTICULTURALISM: THE CONCEPT

Most countries of the world today are internally plural. They have people ofdifferent religions, races and cultures living within their boundaries. How can these diverse communities of people be treated as equal within the framework of democracy? This is the question that multiculturalism poses and seeks to answer. Multiculturalism begins with the understanding that granting equal civil and political rights was an important achievement within democracy, but it has not adequately addressed the issue of discrimination in society. Marginalized cultural communities, as minorities, continue to be disadvantaged even within the democratic nation-state. Culture-based discrimination exists even in the most advanced liberal polities of the west, and it can not be redressed simply by giving identical rights to all persons as citizens. What we need instead are a set of special arrangements that enable minority cultures to survive and flourish in the public arena.

24.1.1 The Ideal of Non-Discrimination

Multiculturalism aims to minimize discrimination of minority cultural communities and to promote the ideal of non-discrimination. Over the last three centuries or more, democratization has occurred by identifying sources of discrimination within the polity and finding ways to eliminate them. As countries became democratic, they set aside discrimination based upon religion, gender, caste and race. Multiculturalism contributes to this on going project of democratization by pointing to a site of discrimination that had received little attention before, namely, cultural identity. The recognition that cultural identities may also be a source of marginalization, and that the actions of the liberal state may disadvantage members of minority communities is the singular contribution of multiculturalism to the discourse on democracy. More than any other strand of political theory, it is multiculturalism that has drawn our attention

to the discrimination faced by vulnerable minority cultural communities within the state, and shown us that pursuing the goal of non-discrimination requires a radical re-consideration of the dominant tradition of liberal theory.

24.1.2 Promoting Cultural Diversity

To counter existing patterns of culture-related discrimination in liberal democratic polities, multiculturalism recommends policies that enhance cultural diversity in society. Protecting and promoting cultural diversity is a primary value within multiculturalism and it is strongly favoured for the sake of i) minimizing minority discrimination; ii) creating conditions in which minority cultures survive and flourish. Theorists of multiculturalism argue that the policies of liberal nation-state disadvantage minority communities. They place external pressures upon the members of minority communities to assimilate into the culture of the majority. Policies aimed at promoting diversity are seen as ways of curbing the process of homogenization that is engendered by the nation-state. Eliminating sources of minority discrimination is, however, only one of the reasons for valuing cultural diversity. An equally important concern is that the rich mosaic of plurality that marks our societies should survive. According to Charles Taylor, if we cannot contribute to our inheritance, we must at least ensure that the diversity that exists survives and does not perish (Taylor 1994:73).

Within multiculturalism, this concern for the fate of diversity is supplemented by the belief that the presence of many different cultures enriches our lives and enables critical self-understanding. It is argued that no culture can "eyer express the full range of human potentialities" (Parekh 1998:207), and each articulates only an aspect of it. Consequently, the presence of many cultures contributes to the "overall' richness of society" (ibid.). Different cultures enable us to experience different ways of living and thinking, and this makes us aware that our cultural horizon is only one of the many that have given meaning to lives of countless men and women. This consciousness of the finitude of our existence prompts us to take a critical look at the beliefs and institutional structures of organization that we have inherited and perhaps accepted (Parekh 1998:212 arid Taylor 1994:72). Will Kymlicka suggests further that diverse cultures offer concrete alternatives: since diverse cultures present diverse projects and systems of external and internal organization, they provide individuals with substantive options and choices that they may explore as they define what is good and desirable (Kymlicka 1991:165).

For all these reasons, multiculturalists prize cultural diversity and consider it a deeply cherished value that must be protected and promoted in society. What needs perhaps to be underlined here is that the diversity that multiculturalism seeks to promote is that of cultures. While liberalism focuses on diversity ofthought, belief and perspective, multiculturalism is concerned about the viability and status of diverse cultures and communities that are associated with them. Further, it is the fate of minority cultures that face external pressures to assimilate or disintegrate that multiculturalism is most concerned about, and by attending to them it aims to protect diversity of cultures. Since the concern all along is for cultural diversity it is the community rather than the individual that has merited greater attention within the framework of multiculturalism.

24.1.3 Multiculturalism, Pluralism and Diversity

While arguing for cultural diversity, multiculturalism operates with the understanding that cultural communities are not voluntary associations. In forming associations people come

together by their own volition to pursue a specitic goal or interest. Cultural communities, by comparison, are groups in which people-find themselves. That is, most of the time people do not make conscious choices; at least they do not choose cultural membership as we choose goods in the market. Further, and this is extremely important, a cultural community is defined by a shared language, history, economic, political and social institutions. Cultures whose fate multiculturalism is concerned about are communities of this kind. They are characterized by common customs, institutions and practices (Kymlicka 1995:76-78).

Since each culture has its own distinct identity and practices, cultures are seen as incommensurable entities that cannot be judged in terms of the values that mark another culture. They can only be known and understood in their own terms. That is, one culture may value technological advancement while the other may seek harmony with nature. Just because the latter does not value or pursue scientific advance as we know it, it does not imply that it is lagging behind. There is, in other words, no ground for assuming that the same values are either cherished in all cultures or that they must be considered worthwhile by all. Cultures must be seen as being incommensurable or non-comparable.

Informed with this perspective, multiculturalism is more than a statement of value pluralism. It does not merely suggest that different value systems exist in society and individuals may favour or commit themselves to any of them. Instead, multiculturalism argues that each culture incorporates a distinct value, different from that which is expressed in another culture. Further, the life of an individual is shaped to a considerable extent by the value framework of the culture to which he belongs. The customs and institutionalized practices of that culture structure his preferences and judgements. What multiculturalism tries then to protect is the cultural context of experience. Its policies are aimed at ensuring that minority cultures—their language, customs and institutions – survive and are treated as equals in the public domain.

The element that needs to be emphasized here is that the mere presence of different religions, races and languages is not enough for a multicultural democracy. The latter requires that each of these cultural communities flourish and receive equal treatment. It is this concern for equality between diverse cultures and communities that is distinctive of multiculturalism and it is this that sets it apart from the assertions of pluralism. Theorists of multiculturalism argue that a plural society requires a multicultural policy framework of democracy but this is at the Ievel of an imperative. In actuality, plural societies may not always head in that direction. Pluralism at the societal plane may co-exist with a state that is mono-cultural, affirming only the culture of the dominant community. Multiculturalism points to just this predicament and shows that many liberal democracies that tolerate differences in society, nevertheless, discriminate against minority cultures, It is to rectify such patterns of disadvantage and cultural discrimination that multiculturalism advocates policies that promote diversity and heterogeneity in the public domain.

24.2 MULTICULTURALISM AND LIBERALISM

Multiculturalism is not the first theory to address the issue of discrimination. In different ways, both marxism and liberalism have dealt with this issue. Liberalism took note primarily ofdiscrimination based on socially ascribed identities, such as, religion, race, caste and gender. Further, in response to exclusions based on these identities, it suggested that individuals be conceived as citizens, dissociated from their social identities, and in that capacity they must all receive the same rights and be treated alike. In other words, liberalism mooted the principle

of formal equality. On the one hand, it tried to set aside distinctions and privileges based on an ascribed identity by treating all individuals equal in the eyes of the law, and on the other, it made a person's identity as a citizen tlie only relevant category in the public domain. All other identities were to be effaced or restricted to the private domain. Individuals were to enter into the political and public arena devoid ofascribed identities and personal modes of identification, and participate within it only as citizens of the polity. The category of citizen was, thus, to be religion and colour-blind.

Within liberalism ascribed identities are discredited as they are not chosen by the individual. People are born into them and the circumstances tliat they are placed in on account of these identities are not of their making. Hence, liberals argue that it is the responsibility of the state to ensure that received identities do not fix roles, positions and opportunities in society. What liberals value then is the autonomy of the individual: the freedom to make choices and the availability of options receives the highest priority in their work. Rights are given to protect that freedom, particularly against opposition from the state as well as oppression from the community. The community, like the majority in society, is perceived to be an authoritarian entity that constraints and restricts the autonomy of the person. Hence, it is suspect and receives no rights. Within liberalism, it is the individual and not the community that is, therefore, designated as the bearer of rights.

Multiculturalism challenges this liberal understanding of the self with the argument that membership of a cultural community is valuable to the individual. It defines, at least in part, their personal identity and forms a "context of experience" (Kymlicka 1995:189). That is, community membership structures individual experience and provides a framework within which things acquire value. One's relationship with other groups in society and their perception of us is also influenced by community membership. Since membership of a cultural community forms an "anchor for self-identifidation" (Margalit & Raz 1990:447) individuals do not, nor must they be expected to, enter into the public domain as "unencumbered" selves, devoid of social identities and a sense of being situated. Contrary to the liberal perception, theories of multiculturalism argue that community identities are bound to enter into the public domain and people may bring into political life issues that arise from their community membership. According to Will Kymlicka, when we expect individuals to bracket their cultural identity, we in fact deprive them of "something that they are reasonably entitled to" (Kymlicka 1995:86).

While devising political institutions of democracy, we need therefore to acknowledge the existence of cultural community identities and begin with the understanding that individuals are not simply members of a political community or a nation-state. They are also members of a cultural community and this membership is deeply cherished by them. Further, excluding a cultural community from the political and public domain, denying it recognition or misrecognizing it, causes grievous injury to the individual (Taylor 1994:25-28). When the cultural community has a low prestige in the public arena, individuals belonging to them develop a sense of low esteem. They become nervous and diffident and are unable to perform successfully in society (Parekh 1992). Some of them respond to the pressures that come from the external world by distancing themselves from their family. This alienation of the self from its family and friends places a heavy toll both on the individual, his family and the community. It creates inter-generation conflicts and deprives the individual of a secure social environment that is necessary for proper growth and development. Since hostile and adverse representations can in this way harm the individual, we owe to others to give them due recognition in the, public arena.

For the multiculturalists, a secure cultural context is an essential condition for leading a reasonably autonomous existence and exercising choices. When a culture is misrepresented or threatened, its members become closed and resistant to any change and innovation. They oppose change that is imposed from the outside as well as suggestions that come from within the community. Eventually, members loose out as tlie space that ordinarily exists for the expression of differences within each culture gets closed. Consequently, even for promoting the ideals that liberals favour - namely, autonomy of the self - a secure culture that receives due public recognition is regarded to be absolutely essential.

24.2.1 Critique of Liberal Democracies

Multiculturalism, as we argued earlier, begins with the understanding that liberal democracies have not been able to ensure equal citizenship for all its members. Even though equal civil and political rights have by and large been given to all, yet, persons belonging to minority cultural communities remain disadvantaged in the public arena. Tliey are disadvantaged and discriminated against because the state, through its laws and policies, endorses the culture of the majority community in society. The policies on language, education, declaration of holidays, dress codes, for instance, reflect the culture of the majority. At a more fundamental level, ceremonial rituals and symbols of the state and its departments also express the same cultural orientation. Collectively, actions of the state popularize and sustain the majority culture and encourage, directly and indirectly, assimilation into that dominant culture. In brief, multiculturalism argues that national culture is in actuality rooted in the culture of the majority. Consequently, when the liberal democratic slate promotes that culture, it privileges tlie majority cultural community while simultaneously disadvantaging the minority communities.

The idea that privileging the majority culture implies disadvantaging the minority cultures is central to multicultural thought. To explain this further with the help of an example: theorists of multiculturalism argue that when English is made the official language of the state, then French language in Canada and the members of that linguistic group are necessarily disadvantaged. Tlie Francophones have to learn English - a language that is not their mother tongue - and excel in it so that they can compete with other people for whom English is tlie first language. To do this, they have to put in a greater amount of effort than the Anglophones, and they have also to acquaint themselves with the culture that is associated with the English language. Parents, who want to ensure that their children have an equal opportunity to occupy prestigious positions in society, also try to send their children to English medium schools. As more and more people make this choice, English language and culture get popularized. More and more people learn that language, but at the same time the number of people who can read and write in the French language also declines. Eventually, the culture tliat is associated with the French speaking community suffers in prestige and support. It becomes increasingly non-viable. Even the children from the community do not associate with it. As they are exposed to another culture in school and other public places, they are alienated from it. Thus, through a variety of processes, the French culture and cultural community are systematically disadvantaged.

Tlieorists of multiculturalism use examples of tliis sort to show that seemingly neutral laws and policies of the state have an implicit bias that favours the majority community and disadvantages minority cultural communities. The declaration of Sunday as a holiday when public institutions and businesses are closed implicitly favours the Christian community

members. With Sunday as the declared public holiday, a devout Christian can go the church For prayers and observe tliis day as the day of rest in accordance with the dictates of his religion. However, a devout Muslim, who wishes to offer prayers on a Friday afternoon in accordance with his religion, is placed at a disadvantage in this system. Since Friday is a working day lie, unlike the devout Christian, does not get any time off. Practices of the state, even the liberal state, thus marginalize and discriminate against tlie members of the minority culture. Indeed, they place external pressures upon the latter to assimilate into the dominant culture. Since the option for minority communities is only to assimilate or disintegrate, multiculturalism is critical of liberal democracies. It questions the central principles of liberal democracy, particularly the notion of formal equality and neutrality, and offers in their place an alternate framework based on the idea of group-differentiated rights and differentiated citizenship. Within the latter, special rights are sanctioned for minority cultural communities so that they may survive and be treated as equals in the liberal state.

24.2.2 Multiculturalism as A Liberal 'Theory of Minority Rights

Multiculturalism rejects the liberal idea of an autonomous, freely choosing, atomized self as well as the belief that the state is, or must be, neutral between different, competing conceptions of good life. It begins instead by locating the individual within a cultural community and argues that no state is, or can be, completely neutral. Even liberal states that claim to be neutral make laws on marriage. divorce, property, inheritance, euthanasia, suicide and a range of other social activities. In each case it endorses and legitimizes one view: for instance, it may uphold and recognize only individual claims to property or only monogamous marriages. Legislation of this kind invariably denies claims of collectively held community property or polygamy as a practice. In fact, all such claims and practices are declared illegal. Here, as in many other cases, the laws of tlie state reflect a conception of what is good and therefore acceptable. This understanding may conform to the conception of good embodied in some cultures, but may conflict with the practices of other cultural communities. Hence, we need to realize that no state is completely neutral. The liberal principle of neutrality must, therefore, be replaced by the notion of "evenhandedness" (Carens 1999: 46-50). In place of pursuing neutrality as the desired goal, the state must act so as to be evenhanded towards diverse communities.

In presenting the ideal of evenhandedness, multiculturalism challenges the liberal conception of individual, state, community and justice. This must not, however, be taken to imply that multiculturalism is anti-liberal. Most theorists of multiculturalism present these alternatives with a view to making liberal democracies consistent with the liberal ideal of equality for all. They argue that the principles of neutrality and formal equality cannot promote equality for minority cultural communities and their members. A system of special rights is, therefore, advocated to protect minority cultures from discrimination in the polity. Will Kymlicka offers another line of argument in this connection. He states that liberalism does not simply value individual autonomy and the freedom to make choices. It wants individuals to have an opportunity to rethink and revise what they have received from society. Autonomy and freedom is valued only because it enables individuals to reflect upon the beliefs and institutions that they have inherited. It is, therefore, the condition of'revisability' that is thus cherished within liberalism. However, revising our cultural inheritances is only possible when the culture is secure within the nation-state. When a culture is under threat and struggling to survive, options tend to get closed. Community members living in these conditions have little possibility of

articulating differences and reshaping their cultural context in accordance with their self-understanding.

According to Kymlicka, we need, therefore, as liberals to be concerned about the fate of minority cultures in our society. And in order to further the liberal ethos, or tlie condition of revisability, we need to supplement the existing framework of individual based rights with special arrangements that allow minority cultures to survive and flourish in society (Kymlicka 1991: 9-19). The multicultural design is here presented to realize the ideal of liberalism, albeit by modalities that found no support in classical liberalism.

24.3 THE IDEA OF DIFFERENTIATED CITIZENSHIP

Liberalism addressed the issue of social discrimination by disregarding ascribed identities and extending tlie same rights to all persons as citizens. Multiculturalism, in sharp contrast to this, argues that identical rights for all are inadequate for minimizing culture-based discrimination. What we require are special rights for identified minorities. The idea that citizens be differentiated on the basis of their cultural identity and that different communities may receive different rights as citizens of the polity is one of the defining features of multiculturalism, and it is expressed through the concept of differentiated citizenship.

The concept of differentiated citizenship rejects the liberal ideal of universal citizenship. Multiculturalism maintains that universal citizenship assumes that all persons are alike. This assumption of homogeneity eclipses group differences. It calls upon the individual to leave behind their particular identities and see themselves only as citizens of the polity. In a society where some "groups are privileged" and others marginalized. this implies that the latter forsake their identity and take on the outlook and perspective of the dominant group—i.e., the majority community. At the same time. the notion of universal citizenship allows the "privileged group to ignore their group specificity" (Young 1990: 165). By enabling the norms and point of view of the privileged majority to appear neutral and universal, this ideal perpetuates "cultural imperialism" (ibid.).

The idea of group-differentiated citizenship and rights is advocated to halt this process of assimilation by giving minority cultural communities rights that would enable them to protect their culture against pressures of homogenization that come from the state and society. It rests on the belief that society comprises of many different cultural communities. but the state invariably privileges and endorses the culture of one community, which is designated as the majority. Since this marginalizes and disadvantages other cultural communities (the minorities), special rights may be extended to them. A distinction may, therefore, be made between citizens on the basis of cultural identity, and this is justified for ensuring equal treatment for all.

24.3.2 Different Kinds of Special Rights

Within the framework of differentiated citizenship, multiculturalism sanctions three kinds of special rights for minority communities: i) cultural rights; ii) self-government rights; and iii) special representation rights. Beginning with the understanding that the state represents the culture of the majority community, multiculturalists argue that minority communities require special rights go that they have access to their culture in the public domain. In western democracies, special cultural rights have been demanded in the form of exemptions from existing laws, assistance for minority cultural institutions and recognition for minority cultural

practices. To take a few examples: the Sikhs in Canada have demanded, and received, exemption from the law tliat prescribes helmet wearing for motorcycle riders. Women from the Asian communities have been granted exemption from wearing a dress while serving as nurses in hospitals. In both cases, the argument made by minorities was that the prescribed code did not take note of the culture of the minority communities, and exemptions were given so that members of these cultural communities may live in accordance with their accepted cultural practices.

In addition to seeking exemptions, minority communities have also sought assistance, by way of financial and other infra-structural support, so that their culture can be represented in the public arena. Here, support has usually taken the form of assistance to establish museums, run minority educational institutions and hold public festivals. At times, minority communities have also demanded recognition for their distinct cultural practices. In India, for instance, religious communities wanted, and were given, recognition for their family law. So, today individuals are governed by tlie personal law of their community. The most significant aspect of claims for recognition are that communities through them seek endorsement of traditional cultural practices and institutional structures. Most often. tlie acceptance oftliese claims brings into effect plural structures of jurisdiction and governance. Sometimes, traditional norms" receive exclusive jurisdiction over the members; on other occasions, traditional norms are placed alongside tlie laws formulated by the state. Whatever be the specific form of arrangement, these cultural rights bestow upon the community and its practices a legal status, thereby making it a legitimate actor in tlie public domain.

The second kind of special right justified within multiculturalism is that of self-government. Like recognition rights. these too take the form of dual structures of jurisdiction. The only significant difference being that self-government rights are linked to territorial claims. Communities that are concentrated in a given region and have lived thcrc for several generations are supposed to receive this right. Self-government rights are thus defended only for a specific sort of minority: namely, communities that are a distinct nation with historically supported claims over that territory and a desire to protect their cultural identity. The purpose of self-government rights is to give communities certain degree of political autonomy to govern themselves in a way that they can protect and promote their distinct cultural identity in a given region.

The third category of minority rights is special representation rights. Tlie assumption behind claims for these rights is that minority communities must have an opportunity to participate in the political process, set agendas and voice their specific point of view. As iris Marion Young argues, "People in different groups often know about somewhat different institutions, events, practices and social relations, and often have different perceptions of the same institutions, relations and events. For this reason, members of some groups are sometimes in a better position than others to understand and anticipate the probable consequences of implementing particular social policies" (Young 1990:186). Consequently. their participation is bound to enrich public discourse while simultaneously bringing groups that are otherwise marginalized into tlie mainstream. It is further argued that the deliberate inclusion of various groups, particularly oppressed minorities, can be a powerful tool for defining public norms and creating deliberative consensus.

Special representation is, thus, seen as a way of including hnd empowering marginalized groups so that they have a sense of participating and contributing to the policy outcomes. At

the same time, it is expected to enrich policy making by bringing in the experiences and perspectives of diverse groups in society. It is this double advantage that justifies claims for specinl representation for communities. In India, special representation was granted to the Scheduled Castes and Scheduled tribes by the Constitution and this gesture was motivated by the need to include populations that had hitherto been excluded from the public and political domain.

24.3.2 Differentiating Between Minorities

So far, we have only outlined the three different kinds of special rights that are supported within multiculturalism for minority communities within the nation-state. The question that needs to be addressed now is – Should all minorities receive each of these rights? Should all minorities be given the same special rights?

Within multiculturalism, at the general level, special rights are defended for minorities but rarely is it said that all the three kinds of rights must be given to all minorities within the state. Most theorists agree that these rights are intended only for the minorities that have been historically oppressed. Also, which set of rights should be granted to oppressed minorities has to be determined by looking at the specifics of the case. Different contexts demand different remedies, and which would be the appropriate course in a given situation will depend upon the Ikind of minority it is, its experience of discrimination and the nature of the state. So we cannot have a general theory of minority rights.

Will Kymlicka, in his writings, however differentiates national minorities and immigrant communities who arc also minorities. Me maintains that self-government rights may only,be given to communities who see themselves as nations with a distinct societal culture, and have historical claims over a given territory. Immigrants come to a country with the clear understanding that they will have to live by the norms of that country, so they cannot claim rights to protect and promote their culture. The issue of whether immigrants can ask for public recognition for their culture and practices is a subject on which there are considerable differences within the multicultural camp. Suffice here to say that special rights are not supported unconditionally, for all communities nor all minorities are expected to be given exactly the same rights as other minorities.

24.4 CRITIQUES OF MULTICULTURALISM

The multicultural analysis ofculture-based discrimination in liberal democracies has received wide attention in recent times. I-lowevcr, its concept of differentiated citizenship and the accompanying defense of special rights for minorities has come under a great deal of resistance. There are four kinds of issues that the critics of multiculturalism have raised. First, it has been argued that the multicultural framework empowers communities and traditional structures of authority. It gives communities authority over the individual and allows them to continue with existing practices in the name of protecting community culture, This sanction given to communities and their practices can be, and often is, used to quell internal differences and promote conformity with existing practices and the views of traditional leaders. As a consequence, individuals as well as marginalized groups within the community, like women, are placed at a idisadvantage. Thus, while multiculturalism addresses the issue of equality between groupg it neglects the equally important concern for equality within the group.

Second, while discussing the question of special rights for minorities, multiculturalism assumes that each community is a homogeneous entity with a clearly identifiable membership. This notion of community further assumes that individuals have a specific identity and they can, on that basis, be located as members of a specific cultural community. This tendency to slot the individual in one community, the critics argue, may have been appropriate in the late nineteenth and the early twentieth century. But today, the individual is continuously exposed to so many different cultural and social influences that we cannot envisage bounded cultures and communities. Besides, individuals usually see themselves as members of many different communities. For example, they may, in different contexts, identify themselves as Indians, Hindus, Brahmins and Women. Their concerns as members of each of these communities may indeed be different and at times, even incompatible. We need, therefore, to begin with a more complex picture of the individual and her community membership.

Third, critics also fear that multiculturalism may lead to the weakening of the nation-state. By associating the culture endorsed by the state with tlie majority community, multiculturalism, they argue, undermines the very possibility of a shared culture of the people in the nation-state. It thus, threatens the national project and calls upon the minorities to distance themselves from the state. Further, the system of special rights brings into effect a framework of dual jurisdiction and dual loyalties. 'This itself is seen as a source of disintegration of the state.

Fourth, theorists of the marxist persuasion particularly argue that multiculturalism neglects, the issue of redistribution. It conceives minority marginalization narrowly as a cultural phenomenon requiring cultural remedies in tlie form of recognition and protection of minority cultures. As a consequences, it looses sight of the multiple ways in which discrimination of minorities occurs and manifests itself in society. In fact, its analysis takes attention away from the urgent task of seeking redistribution of resources and opportunities in society.

24.5 MULTICULTURALISM: AN ASSESSMENT

Each of these arguments raises important question that merit serious consideration. Indeed, theorists of multiculturalism have in the recent past been attentive to these "concerns (see, Mahajan 2002:166-195). Although it is not possible to detail the responses that have come from the multicultural camp, nevertheless, there are two points that need to be emphasized as we conclude the discussion on multiculturalism. One, multiculturalism advocates special rights with a view to strengthening, and not weakening, existing states. Based on the understanding that the threat to territorial integrity of the nation-state conies from ethnic conflicts within the polity, it tries to accommodate marginalized communities by giving them a voice in the political and public sphere. Special rights, including the right to self-government, are intended to provide mechanisms by which oppressed groups may participate and develop a sense of commitment to the state. Theorists of multiculturalism maintain that citizenship is not simply a legal status; it has a psychological dimension. Unless people have a sense of "emotional attachment", identification with the state is not likely to occur (Carens 1996-7:113). Special rights are expected to fulfil this task by providing avenues for inclusion and equality among minority communities.

Two, tlie most serious problem before multiculturalism today is how to protect cultural diversity without negating freedom for the individual and equality for all persons. Advocates of multiculturalism address this issue by suggesting that the community must develop institutions of democratic deliberation so that tlie voice of marginalized groups within the community can

be lieard and accommodated internally. Others maintain tliat the state could prescribe a framework of minimum rights that cannot be violated. Within that framework, communities might determine how best to govern its members. Even though tlie suggested alternatives are not entirely adequate for dealing with the complex nature of issues raised by the concern for freedom and equality, yet, these responses indicate and affirm that multiculturalism is not simply a theory of community rights. Even though multiculturalists have most often been concerned with questions of inter-group equality, the concern for intra-group equality is not absent within it. Indeed, having placed the first set of issues on the agenda of liberal democracies, multiculturalism is increasingly addressing the question of equality within the community.

The significance of multicultural political theory is that it has drawn our attention to the processes of cultural discrimination within liberal democracies, and compelled us to re-think the ideals that have been cherished within liberalism. In particular, it has prompted us to consider whether individual rights, indivisible state sovereignty and uniform citizenship can effectively ensure equality for all in a plural society. It is by virtue of setting this agenda that multiculturalism has today become one of the most influential strand of democratic theory.

24.6 SUMMARY

The concept of multicuturalism and the various theories associated with it have become quite inportant in contemporary lives, Multiculturalism addresses itself to tlie basic issue of discrimination in society; especially in the context of marginalised culural communities such as the minorities. Multiculturalism, therefore, emphasizes group specific rights. It lays stress on societal/institutional arrangements for minority cultures to survive and flourish.

24.7 EXERCISES

I) Explain the concept of multiculturalism in your own words.

2) Critically examine multiculturalism-liberalism interface.

3) Write an essay on the idea of differentiated citizenship.

4) Discuss the critiques of multiculturalism.

5) How will you assess multiculturalism?

UNIT 25 FASCISM

Structure

25.1 Introduction
25.2 Fascism - Meaning and an Ideational Profile
25.3 The Fascist Worldview
25.3.1 Core Ideas
25.3.2 The Operational Dynamics
25.4 Fascism and Challenges to Contemporary Life
25.5 Fascism - An Evaluation
25.6 Summary
25.7 Exercises

25.1 INTRODUCTION

Fascism has been a significant twentieth century development. Orginating from Italy and further maturing as an operational political doctrine in Germany, fascism could apparently be an enduring reality owing to its innate ability in simplifying "the complexities of political life" to the advantage of the proponents of fascism. This was achieved by catering to the exigencies of "us" and "they" where in "they" were not only projected as 'adverseries', but essentially 'inferior' as well. This political dualism, aggressively articulated by fascism, has however come to stay even after the collapse of Italy and Germany after the second world war. It is in this context tliat the 'Epitaph on Fascism' as presented by Hugh Trever-Roper that fascism "began in 1922-23.....came of age in the 1930s.....ended in 1945" sounds too pre mature to easily reconcile with. The post-war political formations in both western and eastern Europe have been significant pointers to this trend. In fact. the ascendancy of un-responsive state authority in the world coupled with hyper socio-cultural polarities of "us" and "they" and ail sorts of intolerances in ititcr-personal and communitarian behaviour clearly suggest tliat fascism is not only relevant today, but it represents for more complex and perverse dimensions that it originally displayed and carried out. It, therefore, poses more severe a challenge to mankind today than ever before.

This unit addresses itself to all these enumerated issues. It seeks to present both the 'original' and 'altered' faces of Fascism with a view to familiarsing you with the changing ideas, facts and processes of fascism, besides enabling you to creatively dispel these trends with the help of a better understanding of the essence of life and a greater appreciation of the pluralist reality that truly envelopes mankind through out the world.

25.2 FASCISM - MEANING AND IDEATIONAL PROFILE

The meaning of fascism poses considerable difficulties owing to the fact that the ideas characterising fascism are 'untidy and inchoate' (Pick Wilforci). These are derived from a variety of sources and socio-cultural traditions. So one does not find a classical text like Marx's *Das Capital*, to authoritatively outline and delienate the central ideas of Fascism. More over, fascism's 'chemical indifference to intellectual honesty' (George H. Sabine) further contributes to the elusive ideational categories that it portrays.

However, an attempt can still be made to construct a fascist world-view by taking recourse to such core ideas as statism, racialism, imperialism, militarism, elitism along with a foundational core of irrationalism. Some of these ideas could be apprehended by concentrating upon the intellectual heritage of the fascist world-view (Rick Wilford). A s a starting point, it can be safely proclaimed that fascism derived much from the mood of revolt that prevailed in Europe during the end of the nineteenth century.

The stated mood of revolt drew heavily from the anti-thesis developed by Social Darwinist (e.g. Spencer) against the prevailing liberal ideas which they essentially perceived as outmoded. Social Darwinists, particularly, articulated a 'muscular philosophy' which helped to foster an intellectual climate within which the myth of racialism began to flourish (Wilford).

This section of tlie unit seeks to construct the fascist world-view by focussing upon the above enumerated core ideas.

25.3 THE FASCIST WORLD VIEW

25.3.1 Core Ideas

Irrationalism

Irrationalism constitutes tlie fundamental layer of tlie fascist world-view. Fascism suggests to repudiate reason and objective science. The complexities of life are such a fascist would argue, that ordinary minds can not grapple with it. Peace and objectivity would not help in conquering the complexties surrounding the human life. Mussolini once proclaimed that reason is "parren intekkactualim" lacking true meaning. The ordinary mind..... "is a wasteland full of mirages that give only an illusion of reality" (Leon P. Baradat). Truth, according to fascism, "is a subjective quality, available only to a few gifted people whose will or spirit or personality is greater than that of the masses." (Baradat)

Fascism drew ideational sustenance from such varied sources as Plato, Rousseau, Hegel and George Sorel to erect the structures of irrationalism. For Mussolini, Hitler etc. stirring the people for action with no provable value or goal sanctity was enough. "Feel, don't think" was their consistent command to their followers, For igniting passions and feelings, they resorted to their rhetorical talents rather than relying on some consistent and colicrent ideology of a written text.

Indiscriminate use of myths was also employed by the proponents of fascism. In particular, the myth of volk was most assiduously articulated by fascism. Although, literally signifying "the people", volk also accompanied some abstmct connotations such as: 'a system of absolute values, an immutable metaphysical ideal of people-hood'(Wilford). George Mosse, thus, explained volk: "Just as individual men had a soul, so there existed a volk soul which like man's soul, give the volk into unique and unchanging "character" This made the Germans, in particular, to transform their collective soul as 'wild and dynamic, based on emotions rather than on a tortured intellectualising'. Irrationalism was further developed under the German philosophical tradition. Fichte, Schopenhauer and Nietzsche collectively sought to repudiate the idealist tradition and espoused irrationalism These sources were frequently used and abused by the fascists for emphasising irrationality and stirring up social passions so tliat fascism could dwell there and make deeper in roads in the society.

Racialism

Strange though it may be, Hitler based his social theory on the works of a French scholar Arthur de Gobineau, who was sent to Germany by France as a diplomat. His influence wit11 the German led him to develop his theory of racial superiority which ultimately had a great impact on German history.

Placing Aryans as the original superior race in the world responsible for the rise of great civilizations, Gobineau found the Aryans intermarrying with the inferior races, thereby causing both the decline of their civilization as well as their social purity. Against this backdrop, Gobineau referred to the Germans as the purest because race they were the Ieast mixed racially. The future of mankind, therefore, depended on the social purity of the Germans.

Gobineau's theory had profound influence among the Germans. Richard Wagner in particular popularized and dramatized the myth of the Germans' racial superiority, Later on, another Germanised English man, Housten Stewart Chamberlain, sought to achieve what Wagner had achieved. Through his musical notes Chamberlain combined teutonic mythology, German philosophical irrationalism and Gobineau's social superority theories. Chamberlain stressed the need for a strong leader to protect and maintain the German social purity by showing to them the way through which this could be done.

Hitler capitalised on these inheritances and condemned the Jews. He applauded the Germans for their racial superiority and particularly, pinpointed the Jews for their villainy in the given scheme of things and peoples. His hatred for the Jews gets amply illustrated in the following passage:

"The Jew.....is a maggot in a rotting corpse ; he is a plague worse than the Black Death of former times; a germ carrier of the worst sort, mankind's eternal germ the spider that slowly sucks peoples' blood out of its pores .....the typical parasite ; a sponger who like a harmful bacillus, continues to spread; the eternal blood sucker.....the peoples' vampire" (Quoted by Leon P. Baradat).

Hitler categories the peoples of the world into three racial categories:

1) The culture creating race (e.g. Aryans)

2) The culture bearing race (e.g. Lastius, Slaves, the Orientals)

3) The culture destroying races (Gypsies, Negroes, Jews)

The racialist imperatives were so deep-rooted in the scheme that I-Iitler used to often proclaim that "We think with our blood". So much so that the fascists would claim that "any knowledge dispelling racial superiority would not be knowledge at all". "Science, like every other human product, is racial and conditioned by blood".

Statism - Drives towards a Corporate State

The notion of Volkish spirit guided the course of state formation under fascism. Volk was traced to medieval Germany, which was portrayed as a close-knit rural society where Volk was conceived of as "the organic wholeness of the national community – a community where the German spirit reigned supreme and subordinated all individual interest and priorities".

Besides the myth of volk, the writings of Hegel provided further impetus to fascist statism. According to Hegel, the organist state was the ultimate idea which manifested as 'the power of reason actualising itself as will". Thus, state was visualised by Hegel as an integrated community wherein individually and collectively, the particular and the universal, coexisted on the basis of reason. Thus portrayed, the state was conceived of as realising spirit or reason in history. State's membership enabled men to move beyond their private interest and embrace the common good.

Moving further from the Hegelian premises and mutilating the mutual dependence of state and civil society, Mussolini proclaimed 'Everything for the state and nothing outside the state.' Thus, the Hegelian prescription of the state as an end in itself was interpreted by Mussolini for furthering the fascist cause. Hitler did not even require a distortion of Hegel's ideas for legitimising his stnte. To him, the stnte was a means for furthering German racial superiority.

The fascist statism drew heavily from totalitarianism, a term used by Mussolini himself. He raised the stature of the state as the "Will of Wills", the "Good of Goods" and the "Soul of Souls". As such, the state can make any demand, give any order, require any sacrifice and the people must obey and comply with. State, argued Mussolini, happens to be the " Creator of Rights" and the 'Good of Goods". As such, it cannot tolerate any resistance from any quarter, It is, therefore, natural that each individual has to perform the maximum service to tlie state, no more and no less.

Hitler, even while according a somewhat secondary status to the state, maximised the totalitarian ethos under his regime. He successfully converted every possible medium as a political tool and decisively ensured that it catered to tlie priorities set forth by his regime.

The fascist conception of stnte authority laid the foundation of a corporate state structure, This and other such trends will be taken up in the next section dealing with the operational dynamics of fascism.

Elitism

Fascism drew legitimacy from the notion of elitism as well. Both I-litler and Mussolini argued that people are essentially uneven in their mental makc-up. physical strength and spiritual endowments. As such, they cannot contribute evenly to civic and state affairs. Since their contribution is uneven, they cannot expect equal rewards for their dissimiliar contributions to the society and the state.

25.3.2 The Operational Dynamics

In operational terms, Fascism of Italy and Nazism of Germany is regarded as "totalitarianism of the right" because fascism organised itself on behalf of many vested interests and against the left-wing parties and trade unions. However, in many of their ideological and political manifestation like a single party political ideology and mobilization, fascism does resemble the communist: totalitarian regimes. Centralization and concentration of political power are other trends, which show fascism analogous to the communist regimes (Roy C. Macridis).

Centralization and Concentration of Power

The top government's organs centralized political power in both Italy and Germany.

Accordingly, all sorts of provincial administrative mechanisms were systematically dismantled under the fascist regimes of Italy and Germany. Thus, fascism neither provided for federalism of any variety nor was there any type of separation of power. The-legislative organs were there to only endorse and ratify governmental enactments. The Italian parliament had the unique distinction in history to unanimously vote for its own abolition. Thus, all power safely rested in the hands of either the Fuehrer (Germany) or Duce (Italy). The entire electoral process was decisively controlled and steered by the single party rule. No wonder, the party cadres overwhelmingly elected the party sponsored candidates who often got over 99% of the votes cast during the elections. The centralized government conclusively frustrated all local press, political activities and opponents, etc and rendered them utterly deficient. Even all potential rising was efficiently nipped in the bud by the fascists.

Single Party

The fascist party in Italy and NASDP in Germany had highly centralized leaderships. These parties organized consent through intensive mobilization. The hierarchical levels of these parties were firmly controlled by tlie Duce and tlie Fuehrer respectively. Annual party congresses were festive gatherings for applauding the leader and confirming his policy guidelines.

Despite the co-existence of the government and the party, the real center of power was always the party. The party steered the state and tlie state, in turn, invariably catered to the party priorities virtually as a subordinate organization.

Absolute Leadership

It was the envisaged role of the leader to amalgamate the people, the party and tlie state into one viable entity. The leader owed his authority through the built up charisma and personal traits. Nazi Germany invented such slogans as "Leader is the party; the party is the leader" and "The leader...knows tlie goals and the direction."Tlie position of the leader was so invincible that Germany came to be known as the "Fuehrer-State", "the Leader-State". This was the highest mark of political absolutism.

The Duce in Italy claimed the same qualities. I-le represented both the state and the party and embodied the interests, goals and ambitions of the nation and the people. He "never sleeps". "With closed eyes, lie reads our innermost thoughts. He knows everything; he is the pride and honor of the nations."

This discussion on tlie operational dynamics of fascism can be concluded by highlighting one or two additional operational trends. First, tlie fascists in Italy and Germany did not "make" a revolution as the communists did. They were on tlie contrary, facilitated to power by the traditional ruling elite, namely the King in Italy and the President of the republic of Germany. Consequently. they took over the state ı-atlier 'legally'. Accordingly,the fascists did not smash the state into pieces, but retained many of its formal institutions.'Thus', Mussolini did not temper with the kingship and the army. At least till tlie outbreak of World War-11, he retained their traditional character. The industrial and business communities too continued to exercise a considerable functional freedom in Germany. Second, fascism appealed overwhelmingly to the youth. Both countries assiduously catered to the establishment of youth organizations. Mass-scale induction and recruitment to the fascist parties were made from the trained youth. Mobilization and organization ol'consent was thus engineered and worked out.

25.4 FASCISM AND CHALLENGES TO CONTEMPORARY LIFE

As pointed out in the very beginning of this unit, fascism did not 'die' with Mussolini and Hitler. Infact, the success of fascism is perceivable in the neo-fascist formations in Britain itself, the mother of liberal democracy. British National Party under the leadership of John Tyndall, is re-legitimising the fascist agenda for Britain and Europe at large. The recession in Europe during the 1980's and 90's has atleast latently, provided a fertile ground to neo-fascism. The remedial measures advocated by such groups reek of old fascist prescriptions: autarky, corporation elitism, racialism, primacy of the state and subordination of the individuals to the state. More dangerously, this neo-fascism legitimates the traditional fascist views on women, "forcefully assigning the homefront" to her: "The mission of women is to be beautiful and to bring children into the world.... the female prettifies herself for her mate and hatches the eggs for him." (Joseph Goebble's view, quoted by Wilford, p. 205). This and similar other views frustrate the newer female identity being internalised by women in both western and non-western societies.

Fascism promises to raise its head whenever democracy, either by accident or design, mismatches development, thereby frustrating the cause of stability and contentment among the people. The binary oppositions of "us" and "they" resurface and breed intolerance and contempt within a society. The "us" and "they" resentment among the ex-colonizers and the ex-colonies still haunts the world. The "developed" – "developing" dualism further accentuates the dualistic indignities of world communities. Racial disharmony has been compounded by religious fundamentalism, which devastatingly aided by terrorism, breccts on unprecedented fascist temper in the world today. Non-appreciation of the pluralist categories of life seems to rob the very life of its intrinsic beauty and harmony. If these trends are allowed to breed further and escalate unabatingly, a new genre of fascism shall come to stay in the world and distort all that has so Far withstood the test of time.

25.5 FASCISM: AN EVALUATION

Fascism as the ideology of war and national expansion, to quote Sabine, was.... "an adventurer's philosophy. By no rational calculation either of individual happiness or of tangible national benefit could such a purpose be made plausible. It propagated a "transvaluation" of values as a political phase for moral cynicism"; (Sabine, p. 811)

The foundational thought of Nietzsche fascism, originating from the writings of Sorel, Schopehauer and I-Iegel, was often found to be a discomforting puzzle. Select pieces of their writings were picked up to provide a respectful authenticity and expedient solutions required by fascism from time to time. For example, Mussolini, having no time himself assigned the task of building up a theory of state to Giovanni Gentile who belonged to the Italian School of Hegelian Philosophy. Gentilc had at hand the Hegelian theory of the state and not having much time lie used it. Mussolini "took what Gentile offered him..." (Sabinc p. 818). The result was adoption of the Hegelian language to camouflage the real intention rather than signifying the substance of Hegel's thought. Noteworthy is the fact that Mussolini, as late as 1920, regarcled the state as a 'curse to mankind'. While in power, he had to glorify all things that tlie state was associated with (narrated by Sabine, p.p. 818-19).

In actual governmental performance, Fascism did not bring about any significant structural changes in Italy and Germany. Economic social stagnation persisted under fascism.

Consequently, fascism "strengthened the anarchism of individual and acted directly contrary to the needs of the country, preventing the modernization of its ancient, quasi-feudal structures"; (International Encyclopedia of the Social Sciences, p. 341).

Despite the enumerated drawbacks, Fascism still holds promise of mass appeal. Whenever 'anemic' conditions prevail, the expedient organizational machinations of fascism could be adopted by societies, atleast as a temporary contemporary 'face-lift' both in European and non-European settings.

To condude, fascism does not cater to the entirety of the life processes despite its misleading spiritual vocabulary and soul-gratifying phrases. The fullness of life depends on tlie planks of pluralism and tolerance of other life-style and thought processes. Life always blossoms in variety. So it warrants a multimedia of flowerbeds spreading delicate fragrances and requiring a delicate handling so that " hundreds of flowers" may bloom and beautify the universe. The sharp and severely cutting edges of fascism can not nurture such sensitivity and sensibility in any perceivable way.

25.6 SUMMARY

This unit on fascism enabled us to discern the meaning of fascism, the factors which led to its growth and development, the categories that characterized the fascist world view, the historical development of fascism and its operational dynamics: We learnt that tlie revolt against rationalism provided to fascisni its desired back drop. We also noticed that racialism, elitism, corporation (statism), imperialism and militarism formed the various aspects of fascist ideology. In historical terms, fascism emerged against tlie depressing ethos of the post-first world war developments, the traditional ruling elite initially facilitated it. Thereafter, it set out its own independent, course of action where the processes of totalitarianism handsomely aided it. At first attracting the socialist and nationalist forces to its fold, fascism catered to political absolutism by singling out its actual and potential enemies and coercing them to a subject status. Once consolidated, it set out on an imperialistic pursuit and joined hands with Nazism on the strength of its military process, which ended with the Second World War. The operational context of fascism saw the rise of a single party, centralization and concentration of power and mass induction of youth in party affairs.

Even after 1945, as you have read in this unit, fascism has not vanished . In fact, neo-fascist outfits, particultarly in Britain, alarmingly knock at the doors of society and threaten the civilized inheritances there as elsewhere. So long the anemic conditions re-surface and developmental processes get abused, the possibilities offascist uprisings can not be discounted, Fascism, after all, thrives on the sharp edges of sacio-cultural exclusivism.

25.7 EXERCISES

1) Write an easy on 'the Fascist World-View'.

2) What are the core ideational categories of fascism?

3) What are tlie major historical stages of fascism? How have they affected the course of European politics? Describe.

4) Discuss the operational dynamics of fascism.

5) Apply the fascist world-view to India and find out whether India contains the possibility of a fascist growth.

UNIT 26 FEMINISM

Structure

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26.1 INTRODUCTION

The origins of the term feminism are not clear. There are several opinions, but the generally accepted version is that it was first used by the Utopian Socialist Charles Fourier in the 19th century, to refer to the question of equal rights for women. In the West, women emerged in the early 19th century as a distinct interest group, partly because by that time it was clear that the promise of equality made by the bourgeois democratic revolutions of the 17th and 18th centuries excluded women, and partly because the Industrial Revolution had led to the increasingly visible presence of women in public employment. The Woman Question emerged at about this time, articulating the questions arising from the exclusion of women from the fruits of Enlightenment Thought.

In other parts of the world, the emergence of this question in the public arena was in the context of anti-imperialist movements and struggles against feudal oppression. Thus, feminist

interventions in post-colonial societies had to engage with both tlie old oppression of traditipn as well as the new oppression of colonialIsm.

Feminist theory and politics is marked by intense internal debates, and it is generally recognized by now that it would be more accurate to talk about "feminisms" in the plural, rather than one single feminism. Nevertheless, what all feminist positions share is a recognition that women are placed in an inferior position in society and that this hierarchy is based on gender. Further, although this hierarchy is justified on grounds of natural differences between men and women, feminists hold that it is in fact based on socio-cultural and economic power structures which have little to do with the biological difference between tlie sexes.

26.2 TYPES OF FEMINISM

Over a century of feminist thought and politics in different parts of the world has produced a rich body of work. The conventional analysis of feminist thought has tended to group it into three streams - liberal, socialist and radical feminism. *Liberal feminism* is understood to work within the framework of the liberal state, theorising equality, freedom and justice in the context of liberal philosophy, pointing out that these concepts are inadequate until the gender dimension is taken into account. *Socialist feminism* links women's oppression to class society, and their critique draws from the marxist categories of analysis, while simultaneously being critical of gender-blindness in marxist theory. *Radical feminism* theorises patriarchy as a system of male dominance independent of and prior to all other systems of domination - that is, in the radical feminist understanding, all other forms of exploitation and oppression are in a sense shaped by oppression based on sex, since that is historically the oldest form of oppression.

However, this outline does not capture the complexities of the debates within feminism, although it is a useful entry point into feminist theory, as long as these distinctions are not understood to be watertight compartments. In this chapter we will provide an introduction to some of the key issues in feminist thought, through an examination of three specific themes - a) patriarchy, b) the sex-gender distinction and c) critique of tlie public/private dichotomy - and different feminist: positions on these issues,

26.3 PATRIARCHY

This term is central to feminist analysis, and refers to an overarching system of male dominance.

26.3.1 Views of Kate Millet

Kate Millet, one of the earliest radical feminists to use the term in the 1970s, developed on sociologist Max Weber's conception of domination to argue that throughout history the relationship between the sexes has been one of domination and subordination, in which men have exercised domination in two forms - through ***social*** *authority* and *economic force*. The emphasis is on patriarchy as a *system*, to establish that men's power over women is not an individual phenomenon, but is part of a structure.

26.3.2 Gerda Lerner's Views

The historian Gerda Lerner defines patriarchy thus: "the manifestation and institutionalisation of male dominance over women and children in the family and the extension of male dominance

over women in society in general.. It implies that men hold power in all the important institutions 'in society arid that women arc deprived of access to such power." This does not mean that every individual man is always in a dominant position and that every individual woman is always in a subordinate position. What it does mean is that under patriarchy there is an ideology that men are superior to women, that women are the property of men and that women should be under the control of men.

26.3.3 Control over Women's Sexuality and Labour Power

Apart from the control of women's sexuality under patriarchy through the strictly policed institution of monogamous marriage, women's labour power is also controlled by men. Women's productivity within the houseliold and outside is controlled by men who will determine whether women will work outside tlie household or not. To maintain this *control over women's sexuality and labour*, they are deprived of access to and ownership of productive resources, which makes them entirely dependent on men. Further, their mobility is limited through rules and norms that confine women within strictly defined spaces.

26.3.4 Different Forms

Patriarchy takes different forms in different geographical regions and different historical periods. For instance, as the liistorian Uma Chakravarty has pointed out, the experience of patriarchy is not the same among tribal women as among women in highly stratified caste society. It is not the same today as it was in the 19th century, and it is not the same in India as it is in the industrialised countries of tlie West. The term "patriarchies" is therefore found useful by feminist scholars to refer to this fluidity. By using this approach, the linkages of patriarchal structures with other institutions are made visible - with, for instance, class, caste, race, nation, and religion. For example, the socialist feminist Zillah Eisenstein uses tlie term "capitalist patriarchy" to emphasise the mutually reinforcing dialectical relationship between capitalist class structure and hierarchical sexual structures. Another such term is "brahminical patriarchy", which Uma Chakravarty uses to draw attention to the intersection of caste and gender oppression.

26.4 THE SEX/GENDER DISTINCTION

26.4.1 Sex is to Nature as Gender is to Culture

One of the key contributions of feminist theory is the making of a distinction between "sex" and "gender". *Sex* as referring to the *biological* differences between men and women and *gender* as indicating tlie vast range of *cultural* meanings attached to that basic difference. This distinction is important for feminism to make because tlie subordination of women has been fundamentally justified on the grounds of tlie biological differences between men and women. This kind of biological determinism has been one of the most important legitimising mechanisms of women's oppression over the centuries. The challenge to biological determinism is therefore, crucial for feminist politics.

26.4.2 Masculinity, Femininity and Cultural Differences

Feminist anthropologists, pre-eminent among whom is Margaret Mead, have demonstrated that what is understood as masculinity and femininity varies across cultures. In other words,

not only do different societies identify a certain set of characteristics as feminine and another set as masculine. but also, these characteristics are not the same across different cultures. Thus, feminists have argued that there is no necessary co-relation between the biology of men and women and the qualities that are thought to be masculine and feminine. Rather, it is child-rearing practices which try to establish and perpetuate certain differences between the sexes. That is, from childhood, boys and girls are trained in appropriate, gender-specific forms of behaviour, play, dress and so on. This training is continuous and most of the time subtle, but when necessary, can involve punishments to bring about conformity. So feminists argue that sex-specific qualities (for example, bravery and confidence as "masculine" and sensitivity and shyness as "feminine") and the value that society attributes to them, arc produced by a range of institutions and beliefs that socialize boys and girls differently. As Simone de Beauvoir put it, "One is not born, but becomes, a woman."

In addition, societies generally value "masculine" characteristics more highly than "feminine" ones, while at the same time ensuring that men and women who do not conform to these characteristics arc continuously disciplined into the "appropriate" behaviour.

So there is nothing "natural" about the sexual division of labour. The fact that men and women perform different kinds of work both within the family and outside has little to do with biology. Only the actual process of pregnancy is biological, all the other work within the home that women must do - cooking, cleaning, looking after children and so on (in other words, the whole range of work we may call "domestic labour") - can equally be done by men. But this work is considered to be "women's work."

26.4.3 Sexual Division of Labour and Work Place

This sexual division of labour is not limited to the home, it extends even to the "public" arena of paid work, and again, this has nothing to do with "sex" (biology) and everything to do with "gender" (culture). Certain kinds of work are considered to be "women's work", and other kinds. men's, but more important is the fact tliat whatever work that women do, gets lower wages and is less valued. For example, nursing and teaching (particularly at lower levels) are predominantly female professions and are also comparatively ill-paid in relation to other while-collarjobs which the middle classes take up. Feminists point out that this "feminization" of teaching arid nursing is because such work is seen as an extension of the nurturing work that women do within the home.

26.4.4 Ideological Assumptions behind Sexual Division of Labour

The fact is that it is not a "natural" biological difference that lies behind the sexual division of labour, but curtain ideological assumptions. So on the one hand, women arc supposed to be physically weak and unlit for heavy manual labour. but both in the home and outside, they do the heaviest of work - carrying heavy loads of water and firewood, grinding corn, transplanting paddy, carrying head-loads in mining and construction work. But at the same time, when the manual work that women do is mechanized, making it both lighter and better-paid, then it is *men* who receive training to use the new machinery, and *women* are edged out. This happens not only in factories, but even with work that was traditionally done by women within the community; for example, when electrically operated flour mills replace hand-pounding of grain, or machine-made nylon fishing nets replace the nets traditionally hand-made by women, it is men who are trained to take over these jobs, and women are forced to move into even lower-paid and Inure arduous manual work.

In other words, the present subordination of women arises, not from unchangeable biological differences, but from social and cultural values, ideologies and institutions that ensure the material and ideological subordination of women. Thus feminists view questions of sex-differentiated work, the sexual division of labour, and more fundamentally, questions of sexuality and reproduction, as issues to be extricated from the realm of "biology", which is understood to be natural and unchangeable. The feminist agenda is to relocate these issues in the realm of the "political", which suggests that they can and must be transformed.

26.5 DEVELOPMENTS IN THE SEX/GENDER DISTINCTION IN FEMINIST THEORY

This particular manner of making the distinction between "sex" and "gender" has been made more complex by feminist scholars over the years. Although the distinction continues to be broadly accepted by all feminists, the initial understanding that "sex" is related to nature while "gender" is related to culture has been reworked considerably. Broadly, we can discern four main ways in which the sex/gender distinction has been further developed in feminist theory.

26.5.1 Views of Scholars like Alisan Jagger

Scholars like Alison Jaggar argue that "sex" and "gender" are dialectically and inseparably related, and that the conceptual distinction that the earlier feminists established between the two is not sustainable beyond a point. In this understanding, human biology is constitiited by a complex interaction between the human body, the physical environment and the state of development of technology and society. Thus, as Jaggar puts it, "the hand is as much the product of labour as the tool of labour." What is meant here is that two processes are involved: human intervention changes the external environment and simultaneously, changes in the external environment shape and change tlie human body. This is trite in two senses. One, in a long-term evolutionary sense, over the millenia. That is, human bodies have evolved differently in different parts of the globe, due to differences in diet, climate and the nature of work performed.

Two, in a more short-term sense, in one lifetime that is, it is now recognised that neurophysiology and hormonal balances arc affected by social factors like anxiety, physical labour, and the level and kind of social interaction, just as much as social interaction is affected by people's neurophysiology and hormonal balances. For instance, certain chemical changes in the body may produce certain symptoms of stress that can bc treated by drugs. But equally, high stress levels can, in fact, be tho reason for higher chemical imbalances, and it may be possible to restore the body's balance only by changing the conditions in which it lives,

When we apply this understanding, that biology and culture are interrelated, to the sex/gender distinction, the relevant implication is that women's bodies have been shaped by social restrictions and by norms of beauty. That is, the "body" has been formed as much by "culture" as by "nature". For instance, the rapid improvements in women's athletic records over the past two decades is an indication that social norms had shaped biology and restricted women's physical development. Feminist anthropologists have also pointed out that in some ethnic groups there is little physical differentiation between men and women. In short, we must consider that there are two equally powerful factors at work - one, there is a range of interrelated ways in which society produces sex differences and two, sex differences structure society in particular ways.

26.5.2 Radical Feminists

A second kind of rethinking of sex/gender has come from radical feminism which argues that feminists must not underplay the biological difference between the sexes and attribute all difference to "culture" alone. To do so is to accept the male civilization's devaluing of the female reproductive role. This is a criticism of the liberal feminist understanding that in an ideal world, men and women would be more or less alike. Radical feminists claim that on the contrary, patriarchal social values have denigrated "feminine" qualities and that it is the task of feminism to recover these qualities, and this difference between men and women, as valuable. The radical feminist position on the sex/gender distinction is that there are certain differences between men and women that arise from their different biological reproductive roles, and that therefore, women are more sensitive, instinctive and closer to nature. Radical feminists such as Susan Griffin and Andrea Dworkin, for example, believe that women's reproductive biology, the process of gestation and the experience of mothering, fundamentally affects their relationship to the external world. Women are, therefore, in this understanding, closer to nature and share in the nature's qualities of fecundity, nurturing and instinct. These qualities have been rejected by patriarchal society but feminists should accept and revalue these qualities. Ecofeminists like Vandana Shiva draw upon this understanding, arguing that the feminine world-view is more respectful of nature, and that women are better attuned towards ecologically sustainable development practices.

Carol Gilligan's book, In *a Different Voice* is a significant example of this viewpoint. Using a psychoanalytical point of view, she argues that because the primary care-giver in childhood - given the sexual division of labour - is invariably a woman (the mother), the process by which men and women come to adulthood is different. Boys come into adulthood learning to differentiate from the mother, while girls do so by identifying with the mother. That is, in a sex-differentiated society, while all infants identify with the mother, gradually boys learn that they are "different" while girls learn that they are the "same" as their mother. This results, Gilligan argues, in women having a more subjective, relational way of engaging with the world, while men have a more objective mode. Women relate to others, while men learn to separate themselves. This explains, for example, the difference in the nature of male and female friendships.

Gilligan's focus in this work is the difference in the ways men and women take moral decisions, and she comes to the conclusion that women are less influenced by nonnative notions of what is right and wrong, and more by other factors like empathy, concern and sensitivity to another's predicament. Men, on the other hand, tend to take moral decisions based on well-accepted notions of what society thinks is right and wrong. Thus, Gilligan concludes that the basic categories of western moral philosophy - rationality, autonomy and justice - are drawn from and reflect the male experience of the world. The female experience is invisible here. To deny difference is, therefore, to agree with the patriarchal negation of femininity as worthless.

In this context, it is interesting to note that some scholars are of the opinion that the strictly bipolar model of masculinity/femininity and the devaluing of the feminine are characteristic of only the modern western civilization. Pre-modern Indian cultures had greater space for a variety of sexual identities - eunuchs, for example, had a socially acknowledged status in Indian society that they have lost in contemporary times. Again, the Sufi and Bhakti traditions drew upon notions of androgyny and often rejected the two-sex model. Take, for instance, this poem by a 12th century Shaivite poet, Basavanna, who wrote in Kannada:

Look here, dear fellow,

1 wear these men's clothes only for you.

Sometimes I am man,

Sometimes I am woman..

Another Shivabhakta, Devara Dasimayya, writing two centuries earlier, wrote:

If they see breasts and long hair coming,

They call it woman,

If beard and whiskers

They call it man.

But look, the sell' that hovers in between

Is neither man nor woman...?

A thought provoking argument is made by Ashis Nandy, that precolonial Indian cultures accorded greater value to femininity. It was with the coming of colonialism that the western valorization of masculinity became tlic norm. Nationalists too, then played into this understanding, and tried to resist the deriding of Indian culture as "effeminate" by claiming to be as "masculine" as the colonial masters - the ideology of revolutionaries for example, was very masculinist. According to Nandp, Gandhi was unique in attempting to focus on "feminine" rather than "masculine" qualities as having the power to resist colonialism - that is, lie emphasized spiritual and moral courage over aggression and violence.

26.5.3 Post-Modernist View

A more recent feminist position takes tlic opposite view from that of radical feminists. While radical feminists argue that the sex/gender distinction underplays sex differences, a school of postmodern feminist thought holds that it over-emphasizes the biological body. Judith Butler, For instance, argues that if "gender" is the cultural meanings that the sexed body takes on, then gender cannot be said to follow from "sex" in any one way. What she says is that "gender" is not the cultural inscription *of* meaning on to a pre-given "sex"; rather, gender as a way of thinking and as a concept, produces the category of biological sex. In this understanding, "sex" docs not precede "gender" but "gcndcr" precedes "sex." Butler thus suggests a "radical discontinuity" between sexed bodies and culturally constructed genders.

What is characteristic of this position is that it holds that the category of "woman" does not exist prior to the thinking about is. Gender is something that is constructed through relations of power, and through a series of norms and constraints that regulate what will be recognised as a "male" body and a "female" body. Through such norms, a wide range of bodies are rendered invisible and/or illegitimate. For instance, infants born with no clear determining sexual characteristics. or eunuchs, or men and women who choose not to follow the dress norms prescribed for their gender. All these are either marginalised, criminalised or forced to fit into the existing two-sex model in some way or the other. Most modern languages have no way of speaking of a human who does not tit into either ses. What this means is that language forces "reality" into certain pre-given patterns and prevents certain possibilities from being realised.

Alison Jaggar discusses a study in tlie USA of children whose sex had been incorrectly assigned at birth due to such ambiguity - when the "real" sex of the child emerged at a later stage, both parents and medical practitioners generally decided on surgery to confirm the sex attributed at birth. This was invariably preferred to simply accepting that the child's sex was different from that attributed at birth. In other words, surgical intervention to change "sex" was thought to be easier than eradicating years of cultural "gender" conditioning. Think about it - if you had a three-year old son whom you took to the doctor for some problems, and discovered that the child was more female than male. Would you prefer to now come to terms with the fact tliat you liave a daughter, inform everybody, change the way you dress and think of your child, or would you prefer surgical intervention to retain your "son" as a son? The fact is that tlie latter option is what any of us would prefer. What does this tell us about the supposedly unchangeable "natural" category of biology and conversely, about the supposedly changeable category of "culture"? Does it not seem that culture is more concrete sometimes than biology?

Feminist scientists such as Ruth Bleier and Evelyn Fox Keller have argued that a rigid sex/gender distinction restricts "biological sex" - that is, sex defined as anatomical, hormonal or chromosomal - as something to be studied by the bio-medical sciences, "gender" being studied by the social sciences. Such an understanding, they argue, mistakenly assumes that while cultural notions of gender may change, the body remains as an unchanging biological reality that needs no further explanation. These feminist scientists argue that on the contrary, our perceptions and interpretations of the body are mediated through language, and the bio-medical sciences function as a major provider of this language.

Such a feminist position rejects the idea tliat scientific facts about the body simply exist to be discovered. Rather, scientific "facts" are deeply embedded in society and culture. Thus "sex" is constructed by human practices.,

26.5.4 Gender Identity Interface

A fourth kind of rethinking of the sex/gender distinction comes from locating "gender" in a grid of identities - caste, class, race, religion. This would mean that the biological category of "women" does not necessarily have shared interests, life-situations, or goals. This kind of understanding has arisen from the political practice of women's movements all over the world, which has increasingly shown up the fact that "women" do not exist as a pre-existing subject which can simply be mobilized by the women's movement. That is, women identify themselves not only, and not even necessarily primarily, in terms of their gender, but as black, or muslim, or dalit, or peasant. So in many cases, women may be easier mobilized in tcrtns of their religion, for example, than by the women's movement.

In the case of India, a good example of this is the debate over the Uniform Civil Code. All religious communities have their own personal laws which discriminate against women on matters of marriage. divorce, inheritance and guardianship of children. The demand for a uniform civil code which would give all women equal rights as citizens has therefore been a demand of the women's movement since 1937. However, in the growing atmosphere of communalism since the 80's, and the insecurity felt by religious minorities, most sections of the women's movement have gradually shifted to the opinion that the position of women should be improved by reforms within personal laws, rather than by forcing communities to obey legislation passed by the state. The state no longer has the legitimacy it had in the immediate post-independence years, its role in communal violence is increasingly suspect,

and it cannot be seen simply as an agent of progressive social change. Thus what was a simple feminist demand that all *women* should have equal rights has been considerably transformed by the politics of *religious* identity.

Further, all politically active women do not necessarily act as feminists - they may well be representing interests and structures of power which feminist politics in India has sought to struggle against. Thus, we find women active in Hindu right-wing politics and in anti-lower caste movements like the agitation against the Mandal Commission report. In other words, in this understanding, the feminist sex/gender distinction must take into account other modes of constituting identity. Depending on the context, even as feminists, we may have to privilege caste or class identity over gender in some cases, just as we expect marxists or dalit activists to privilege gender over class and caste in some contexts.

26.5.5 Naturalness of Heterosexuality Questioned

A further significant implication of the sex/gender distinction suggested by feminist theory is that the supposed naturalness of heterosexuality is called into question. Adrienne Rich uses the term "compulsory heterosexuality" to refer to the way in which heterosexual marriage is set up as the unquestionable norm. If "male" and "female" as natural categories are challenged by feminist theory, then it offers simultaneously, a challenge to the whole range of institutionalised practices (marriage and family) through which patriarchal property and power relations are maintained. Thus, sexual identity and sexual orientation are important issues for contemporary feminist theory.

26.6 FEMINIST CRITIQUE OF THE PUBLIC/PRIVATE DICHOTOMY

In liberal theory the distinction between "public" and "private" answers the question of the legitimate extent of the authority of the law. The public realm is understood in this context to be open to government regulation while the private realm is to be protected from such action - sexuality and the family being understood to be private. In Marxist theory too, this distinction is central, although from a different point of view. Engels argued that women's oppression begins with the transformation of housework from a public to a private service. The "private" in this sense, is the arena of oppression and only when women emerge into the "public" sphere of production will they become truly emancipated. Since for Engels the motor force of history is provided by changes in the relations of production (defined, in the context of capitalism, as the relations between capitol and labour), housework is not "work", Women participate in history only to the extent that they emerge from the "private" and enter the industrial workforce.

26.6.1 Feminist Criticism

Feminist scholarship emerging from both liberal and Marxist traditions have contested this distinction as being conceptually flawed and politically oppressive. From within the liberal tradition comes the argument that the dichotomy assumed between "public" (non-domestic) and "private" (domestic) has enabled the family to be excluded from the values of "justice" and "equality" which have animated liberal thought since the seventeenth century-beginnings of liberalism. The "individual" was the adult male head of the household, and thus his right to be free from interference by the state or church included his rights over those in his control in the private realm - women, children, servants. Thus, oppression within the family was rendered invisible to political theory.

In addition to sharing this view, socialist-feminists critique the public/private distinction in Marxist theory produced by the model of political economy based on "production", defined as econoinic production for the capitalist market. This model, they argue, ignores the "private" sphere of "reproduction", where women are responsible for reproducing both humans (through child-bearing) and labour power (through housework.) For traditional marxists, this work is seen to be part of the non-economic or superstructural realm, and is not even defined as "work". Socialist feminists therefore, contest the public/private distinction by showing that sexuality, procreation, and housework, understood to be "private", in fact hold up the "public" sphere of production. Their argument is that housework is a commodity - it is unpaid labour that helps to reproduce labour power. This is so in two senses - a) when male labour comes home, it is the housework done by women that ensures that they can go back to work the next day b) the bearing of children reproduces actual people who will work in factories etc.

However, this work is not paid for, and this unpaid labour in the "private" sphere underlies and ensures capitalist production in the "public" sphere.

Thus, feminists across the political spectrum are agreed that the public and the private are not two distinct and separate spheres and that the assumption that they are, is uniformly detrimental to women's interests.

26.6.2 Lack of Consensus Among Feminists

However, there is no consensus on the consequences of this understanding for feminist practice. From one kind of feminist position, characteristic of US feminism, it is possible then to argue that many claims important to feminists, from reproductive rights to protection against sexual harassment, are most effectively grounded on the claims to privacy. Infact, the rhetoric of the individual's right to privacy has been used in the USA to secure some rights for women against the patriarchal family. For example, the landmark judgement on abortion in Roe v. Wade (1972) is based on the belief in the individual woman's right to privacy. So was the judgement in 1965 that the right of married couples to use contraceptives is part of "a right to privacy older than the Bill of Rights." Feminists who support privacy as a ground for securing rights for women, while challenging the traditional public/private dichotomy, make the argument that the virtues of privacy have not been available to women since they did not have the status of individuals in the public sphere. In this view therefore, the task of feminist practice is to transform the institutions and practices of gender so that a genuine sphere of privacy, free of governmental and legal intrusion, can be ensured for both men and women. This is not a position taken within the Indian women's movement.

More common here is the diametrically opposite stand arising from the radical feminist slogan "the personal is political" which has brought into the public arena issues such as domestic violence against women, child abuse and rape. Feminist pressure for legislation on these issues has meant the recognition that violence of various kinds against women in the "private" realm of the family and sexuality is in principle as actionable as violence in the "public" arena. The logical extension of this line of thinking is that privacy and the family are areas of "judicial void" or "judicial weakness" to the extent that they are outside the application of the law. Thus issues arising from sexuality and family take on legal significance. Although adherents of this position do hold that the state is paternalistic and masculine, they are confident that if a law is designed by feminists from the standpoint of women, it can be of advantage to women. They denounce the right to privacy, therefore, as a means to protect the existing

structures of power and access to resources in the private sphere. For example, it is argued that by sanctioning abortion as a right of privacy, the state has ensured that the control women won out of this legislation has gone to men within the family - husbands and fathers. Further, when abortion is framed as a right of privacy, the state has no obligation to provide public funding for abortion.

Thus, the feminist reconceptualisation of the public/private dichotomy and the critique of the family as an oppressive institution opens up several new areas of debate.

26.7 SUMMARY

In this unit, you have learnt the basic meaning of feminism. The origin of the term has been traced and the three broad strands of feminism – liberal, socialist and radical have been explained. Feminism and patriarchy are inextricably linked and thus, the latter has been analysed in detail. You also now know that 'one of the key contributions of feminist theory is the making of a distinction between "sex" and "gender".' The unit also tells us in detail about the developments in the sex/gender distinction in feminist theory. It should be realised that the sex/gender distinction is not as simple and straight as it may first appear.

Through this overview, we have seen how feminist theory has developed over a century of political practice, generating new debates within itself, and offering new challenges to key concepts of mainstream political theory.

26.8 EXERCISES

1) Trace the origin of the term feminism.

2) Enumerate the different types of feminism. What is common to different feminist positions?

3) Explain the meaning of patriarchy with reference to the views of some feminist scholars.

4) Describe some forms of patriarchy.

5) What distinction do feminists make between sex and gender?

6) What do you understand by sexual division of labour? What are the ideological assumptions behind it?

7) What are the views of scholars like Alisan Jaggar on the sex-gender interface?

8) Briefly examine the radical feminist perspective on sex-gender inter-relationship or the post-modernist perspective.

9) Discuss the gender-identity framework with a suitable example from India.

10) What is the public-private dichotomy in political discourse?

11) Briefly discuss the feminist critique of the public-private dichotomy.

UNIT 27 GANDHISM AND PACIFISM

Structure

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27.1 INTRODUCTION

This century has witnessed two world wars and several wars between countries. which brought in untold miseries. Science and technology have produced solutions to some of the dreaded diseases, but they have also developed a nuclear arsenal with deadly ramifications. The world is shrunk in size and is fast emerging as a global village. However, the world is swept by the winds of violence. Inspite of modernity and advancement towards material gain and economic gains, peace and happiness have eluded mankind.

How can conflict be resolved and order established if the authorities protecting interests of all are themselves prisoners of 'self-interest'? This was tlie dilemma faced by Mahatma Gandhi. He introduced ethics in politics and made self-realization the purpose of life disapproving of the pursuit of 'self-interest' for worldly riches and pleasures. The Gandhian message of Truth and Non-violence seems to be the only hope and light in these dark days. The 'soul-force' when awakened is capable of burning all impurities, whether political, economic or social. Pacifism is the only solution for the survival of humanity.

27.2 GANDHISM

Mahatma Gandhi is a religious humanist. For the attainment of Swaraj, he has worked out certain principles that are woven into political philosophy by others. These principles of Gandhi are known as Gandhism. Gandhi had neither tlie time nor the patience to formulate any 'theory' with the result what we have today is a collection of speeches, articles and other writings, which are not 'theory', but, at best, the background fora sound theory. Here are three different paragraphs from Gandhi's writings which give us an insight into his thought:

I am not a visionary. I claim to be practical idealist. The religion of non-vio fenceis not meant merely for the rishis and saints. It is meant for the comrcon people as well. Non-violence **is** *the*

law of our species as *violence is the law of the brute. The spirit lies dormant in the brute and he knows no law but that of physical might. The dignity of man requires obedience to a higher law-to the strength of the spirit.*

I have, therefore, ventured to place before India the ancient law of self-sacrifice. For Satyagraha and its offshoots, non-co operation and civil resistance, are nothing but new names for the law of suffering. The rishis, who discovered the law of non-violence in the midst of violence, were greater geniuses than Newton. They were themselves greater warriors than Wellington. Having themselves known the use of arms, they realized their uselessness and taught a weary world that its salvation lay not through violence, but through non-violence.

My marriage to non-violence is such an absolute thing that I would rather commit **suicide** *than be deflected from my position. Devotion to truth has led me to arrive at certain ethical principles to guide human behavior, in individual as well as in collective life. A seeker of truth must lead life according to these ethical principles in order to prepare him for the path of truth. These principles must also serve as the bedrock for the social, political and economic structures to create a society based on truth. All our actions are to he judged in the light of these principles. The world provides us an opportunity to apply these principles of truth, test ourselves and our understanding of truth. A religious practice of these ethical principles leads us to the purification of the 'self' day by day and finally results in the realization of absolute truth. Ethics is thus a way to God.*

Humanity is passing through a phase of crisis. Gandhi has denied using any 'ism'. but his principles have the solutions of world problems being faced by humanity. Gandhi has an alternative to the Liberal as well as the Marxist ideology. The development of the ideas of Gandhi after him and their application become important as a solution oriented mechanism to save humanity. There is an enormous task before us.

27.3 PACIFISM

The dictionary meaning of the term 'pacifism' means a belief that all war is morally wrong and that disputes should be settled by peaceful means. 'She ethical principles of Gandhi adhere to this concept. Politics, in the hands of greedy and power-hungry people, has become an instrument of crime, corruption and terrorization. Criminalisation of politics has made a sham of democracy. The world is quite disillusioned by the working of the structures of violence, both capitalism and communism. Human society must abolish war if it is to survive. We are in a new era. The old methods and solutions are no longer enough. Wc must have new thoughts, new ideas, and new concepts. We should now proclaim our readiness to abolish war, The result would be magical. The only alternative is peace-power or non-violent resistance.

Gandhi also considers modern science and technology to be responsible for mindless violence in today's world. Whether it is in tlic form of arms and ammunitions or subordination of human beings to technology, in fact it is modern science that is responsible for a rise in this phenomenon. And tlic end-result of all these is the creation of a violent social order,

27.3.1 Non-violence and Power

Gandhi has arrived at the principles of pure love as a means to realize God, the absolute truth. Observance of the law of love is non-violence in relationships. Non-violence is the means and

truth is the end. Non-violent methods are considered as instruments of power, to be used to control the opponent's power. Non-violent actions cut off the sources of the opponent's power. Where non-violent coercion operates, changes are achieved against the opponent's will and without his agreement, the sources of his power having been so undercut by non-violent means that he no longer has control. This decrease in the power of the opponent gives the non-violent coercionists the momentum and strength they need to continue their campaign.

Non-violence is a mighty weapon to overcome evil, even as infinite fraction of which is capable of doing wonders. It is tlie greatest force at the disposal of mankind. It is mightier than the mightiest weapon of destruction devised by man. it awakens the soul-force in man through self-purification and discipline that is capable of overcoming any kind of brute force. Non-violence is not simply a passive state; it is an active engagement in every field of life due to the dynamic and creative force of love. It is a ceaseless occupation with constructive work in every field of individual and collective life whether religious, social, economic and political. It is action that is non-violent. This view of non-violent action as a technique of active combat is diametrically opposed to tlie popular assumption that, at its strongest, noti-violent action relies on rational presumption of the opponents, arid that more commonly it consists simply of passive submission. Therefore, non-violence means power, as non-violent action is just what it says: action, whicli is not violent, but not inaction. Thus, although lion-violence may be used as a weapon, it is not a sign of submission or weakness.

27.3.2 Believers vs. Pacifists

The believer in non-violence shares with many others the goal of a decent, just and equitable society. He wants to see an end to injustice, tyranny, corruption, and the exploitation of men by men. With others, lie is deeply concerned to establish peace in the world, but not a peace purchased at any price. He knows that the only peace that can endure and be worthy of the name is based on justice.

Among those who think of themselves as believers in non-violence, there are diverse points of view. Some use non-violence only as a technique which might be discarded under other circumstances; some hold to non-violence as a matter of principle, and for some it is an essential part of their religious faith.

i) **Passive** resistance: Passive resistance is likely to be defensive in both its tactics and its strategy, and to involve forms of non-co-operation that embarrass rather than coerce. It means directly altering one's own behaviour, but not directly impeding that of the opponent. If non-resistance "goes along with" the opponent, absorbing the latter's aggression and offering no counteraction, passive resistance is a way tliat refuses to go along with the opponent, but chooses routes of action which tactically disengage the resister from the direct point of conflict. It may overtly acquiesce to the opponent's terms, but its strategic effect is to so change the terms of conflict that the opponent, for his own reasons and not because of any overt impediment, is led to initiate change. The boycott or withdrawal of patronage, the walkout aspect of a strike-these are types of passive resistance. In these actions, the resister simply removes himself from engagement with his opponent at the point where the opponent relies upon the resister's reciprocal action to complete his own action. A factory cannot produce goods without the action of its workers. If they cease their productive action, tlie management of the factory is deprived of an indispensable element in the process of production. If bus riders passively refuse to ride buses, the

buses will go empty and tlie bus company's revenues will be curtailed in proportion to the effectiveness of the boycott. The next step is up to the factory or the bus company, which must either, come to terms with the resisters or replace them or force them to come back. But it must do something to regain control of tlie situation.

ii) **Satyagraha:** The objective of satyagraha is the constructive transforming of relationships in a manner which not only effect a change of policy, but also assures the restructuring of the situation which led to conflict This calls for a modification of attitudes and requires fulfillment of tlic significant needs of all parties originally in conflict. The fulfilling of needs is both an objective and a means for effecting fundamental change.

27.3.3 The Wan-Violent Society

Gandhi says that non-violence is not merely a personal virtue. It is also a social virtue to be cultivated like tlic other virtues. Surely, society is largely regulated by the expression of non-violence in its mutual dealings. What I ask for is an extension of it on a larger, national and international scale. All society is held together by non-violence, even as the earth is held in her position by gravitation. But when the law of gravitàtion was discovered, tlie discovery yielded results of which our ancestors had no knowledge. Even so, when society is deliberately constructed in accordance with the law of non-violence, its structure will be different in material particulars from what it is today. But I cannot say in advance what the government based on non-violence will be like.

What is happening today is disregard of the law of non-violence and enthronement ofviolence as if' it were an eternal law. A society based on non-violence can only consist of groups settled in villages in which voluntary co-operation is the condition of dignified and peaceful existence.

27.3.4 The Government

Gandhi presents the nature of government as such:

The Government cannot succeed in becoming entirely non-violent, because it represents all the people. I do not today conceive of such a golden age. But I do believe in tire possibility of a predominantly non-violent society. And I am working for it. There remains the question as to whether in an ideal society there should be any or no government. I do not think we need worry ourselves about this at the moment. If we continue lo work for such a society, it will slowly conic into being to an extent, such that the people can benefit by it. Euclid's line is one without breadth, but no one has so far been able to draw it and never will. All the same, it is only by keeping the ideal line in mind that we have made progress in geometry. What is true here is true of every ideal.

In the absence of an ideal *Ramrajya*, which Gandhi sets out to achieve, he encourages us to realize that the second best form of government would be such, that is based on the principles of non-violence.

27.3.5 The Power of Non-Violence

Non-violence in its dynamic condition means conscious suffering, It does not mean meek submission to the will of the evildoer, but it means tlie pitting of one's whole against the will of the tyrant. Working under this law of our being, it is possible for a single individual to defy

the whole might of an unjust empire to save his honour, his religion, his soul and lay the foundation for that empire's fall or its regeneration.

Active Force

The non-violence of Gandhi's conception is a more active and more of a real fighting against wickedness than retaliation whose very nature is to increase wickedness. He contemplates a mental and. therefore, a moral opposition to immoralities. He seeks entirely to blunt the edge of the tyrant's sword, not by putting up against it a sharper-edged weapon, but by disappointing his expectation that he would be facing physical resistance. It would at first dazzle him, and at last compel recognition from him, which recognition would not humiliate him but would uplift him. It may be urged that this again is an ideal state. And so it is.

Gandhi says that he admits that the strong will rob tlie weak and tliat it is a sin to be weak. But this is said of tlie soul in man, not of the body. If it were said of the body, we could never be free from the sin of weakness. But the strength of tlie soul can defy a whole world in arms against it. This strength is open to the weakest in body.

Non-violence is the greatest force at the disposal of mankind. It is mightier than the mightiest weapon of destruction devised by the ingenuity of man. Destruction is not the law of tlie humans. Man lives freely by his readiness to die, if need be, at the hands of his brother, never by killing him. Every murder or other injury, no matter lor what causes, committed or inflicted on another is a crime against humanity.

Non-violence is like radium in its action. An infinitesimal quantity of it embedded in a malignant growth which acts continuously, silently and ceaselessly till it has transformed the whole mass of the diseased tissue into a healthy one. Similarly, even a little of true non-violence acts in a silent, subtle, unseen way and uplifts the whole society.

Matchless Bravery

An armed soldier relies on his weapons for liis strength. 'rake away from him his weapons—his gun or his sword, and he generally becomes helpless. But a person who has truly realized the principle of lion-violence has the God-given strength for his weapon and the world has not known anything that can match it. A small body ofdetermined spirits fired by an unquenchable faith in their mission can alter the course of history. Non-violence of the strong is any day stronger than that of the bravest soldier fully armed.

Exercise in Faith

The hardest metal yields to sufficient heat. So, even the hardest heart must melt before the heat of non-violence. And there is no limit to the capacity of non-violence to generate heat. Every action is a resultant of a multitude of forces, even of a contrary nature, There is no waste ofencrgy. So we learn in the books on mechanics. This is equally true of human actions. The difference is that in one case, we generally know the forces at work, and when we do, we can mathematically fore tell the resultant. In the case of human actions, they result from a concurrence of forces, most of which we have no knowledge of. Rut our ignorance must not be made to serve the cause of disbelief in the power of these forces. And non-violence being the mightiest force in the world and also the most elusive in its working. it demands the

greatest exercise of faith. Even as we believe in God out of faith, so we have to believe in non-violence as a matter of faith.

Violence like water, when it has an outlet, rushes forward furiously witli an overwhelming force. Non-violence cannot act madly. It is the essence of discipl ine. But, when it is set going, no amount of violence can crush it. For its full play, it requires unsullied purity and an unquenchable faith.

A Science

Ahimsa is a science. The word 'failure' has no place in the vocabulary of science. Failure to obtain the expected result is often the precursor to further discoveries. If the function of *himsn* is to devour all it comes across, the function of *ahimsa* is to rush into the mouth of *himsa*. In an atmosphere of *ahimsa,* one has no scope to put his *ahinzsa* to the test. It can be tested only in the face of *himsa*.

Violence can only be effectively met by non-violence. This is an old, established truth that the weapon of violence, even if it was the atom bomb, became useless when matched against non-violence. That very few understand how to wield this mighty weapon is true. It requires a lot of understanding and strength of mind. It is unlike what is needed in military schools and colleges. The difficulty one experiences in meeting *himsa* with *ahimsa* arises from the weakness of mind.

The Deed, not Doer

'Hate the sin and not the sinner' is a precept which, though easy enough to understand, is rarely practiced, and that is why the poison of hatred spreads in the world. This *ahimsa* is the basis of the search for truth. I am realizing every day that the search is vain, unless it is founded on *ahimsa* as the basis. It is quite proper to resist and attack a system, but to resist and attack its author is tantamount to resisting and attacking oneself. For we are all tarred with the same brush, and are children of one and the same creator, and as such, the divine powers within us are infinite. To slight a single human being is to slight those divine powers, and thus to harm not only that being, but with him the whole world.

Man and his deed are two distinct things. Whereas a good deed should call forth approbation and a wicked deed disapprobation, the doer of the deed, whether good or wicked, always deserves respect or pity as the case may be.

Those who seek to destroy men rather than manners adopt the latter, and become worse than those whom they destroy in the mistaken belief that manners will die with the men. They do not know the root of the evil.

It is the acid test of non-violence that in a non-violent conflict, there is no rancour left behind, and in the end the enemies are converted into friends. That was my experience in South Africa, with General Smuts. He started with being my bitterest opponent and critic. Today, he' is my wannest friend.

The principal implication of *ahimsa* is that the *ahimsa* in us ought to soften and not to stiffen our opponent's attitude to us; it ought to melt him; it ought to strike a responsive chord in his heart.

As *ahimsa*-ites, can you say that you practice genuine *ahimsa*? Can you say that yo11 receive the arrows of the opponent on your bare breasts without returning them? Cali you say that you are not angry, that you are not perturbed by his criticism?

By reason of a life-long practice of *ahimsa*, Gandhi claims to be an expert in it, though very imperfect. Speaking in absolute terms, he says, "the more I practice it, the clearer I see how far I am from the full expression of *ahimsa* in my life." Apart from the philosophical justification for *ahimsa* in terms of the relativityoftruth, there is also an ethical and moral basis for it, which Gandhi puts in terms ofends-means relationship. In his words, fruits of a tree will depend on what type of seed has been sown.

27.3.6 The Technique *of* Non-violent Action

Non-violentaction is a techniqueof conducting protest, resistance, and interventions without physical violence by: (a) acts of omissions-that is the participants' refusal to perform acts which they usually perform, are expected by custom to perform, or are required by law and regulation to perform; or (b) acts of commission-that is, the participants perform acts which they usually do not perfonn, are not expected by custom to perform; or (c) a combination of both.

The technique includes a multitude ofspecific methods which are grouped into three main classes: non-violent protest and persuasion (symbolic actions communicating opinions, such as parades and leafleting); non-cooperation (withholding ofsocial, economicor political cooperation, as by social boycotts, economic boycotts, labour strikes, or political non-cooperation and disobedience); and non-violent intervention (physical, psychological,social, economic and political actions that disrupt the operation of the system being opposed).

Although Gandhi is not the originator of non-violent struggle, lie is a major historical player in its refinement and development. Gandhi also recognizesthe importance of strategy-skillfulness in tlie choice and use of means and methods to increase the possibilitiesof success in non-violent struggle. He has contributed significantly to the refinement of strategy and the practice of careful strategic planning for this type of conflict. He has brought greatly increased strategic sophistication to the technique.

He charted ways in which people-both intellectuals and the masses-who did not share his full beliefs could join in non-violent struggles and could become empowered. He challenged the most powerful and vast empire the world had ever seen and won.

As per Gandhi's lessons for us to overcome multiple conflicts, the following ideas are important:

- Justice and freedom require empowering oppressed people and redistributing power in society.
- Peace is not achieved by stifling conflicts in which important issues are at stake, but by using non-violent struggle to fight those conflicts to the point of resolution.
- Mass non-violent struggle in politics is possible as a substitute for both passivity and violence.

- Masses of people who will never accept non-violence as a moral principal will at times practice pragmatic non-violent struggle.

- The key to widespread adoption of non-violent means lies in formulating and implementing strategies of non-violent struggle to serve as substitute for violence for specific purposes.

- Non-violent struggles can be made significantly more effective if wise strategies with implementing tactics are developed and applied.

- Non-violent struggles can be developed, refined, adapted in a series of specific replacements to be a substitute for violence as a final means of applying pressure and power in society and politics.

27.4 THE RELEVANCE OF PACIFISM

Gandhi, who is much more realistic than some would give him credit for, knows that such a reversal would not and cannot bring into being some kind of instant utopia. Unlike some revolutionary programmers, non-violence is not a program Tor ending every human limitation and every human imperfection. In contrast to some revolutionary creeds, non-violence does not justify crime today for the sake of a perfect tomorrow. At one level, non-violence is a transcendent ideal, that is, a higher order goal that we may approach asymptotically, but never completely attain. At another level, non-violence is a process, a way of life, an alternative approach to dealing with conflict. As such, it recognizes the inevitability of conflict, even in the best of all possible worlds, and the inevitability of human error, human egoism, and human shortsightedness. Non-violence is a means for limiting the damage those imperfect human beings will otherwise inflict on each other and on the world we inhabit. In sum, non-violence is both an ideal vision, which can guide us in the transformation of human life and a means by which human beings can live together inspite of deep-rooted limitations. Non-violence is a pursuit. Gandhi calls it a pursuit of truth. It reaches towards what is most sublime, but its roots are in a sober recognition of human vulnerability, human ignorance, and human self-centeredness.

27.5 SUMMARY

In short, to adopt non-violence is to adopt a new way of coming to terms with our vulnerability, a new way of dealing with the fear to which we are subject and the fear, which we can inspire in others. To enter this way is not to become 'defenseless'. It is to reconceive what we mean by defense, what we consider it most urgent to defend, and all means by which we will engage in defense. When pacifism becomes a primary value, we are compelled to seek new ways to carry on and to solve conflicts, new ways to protect what is most important, and new ways to struggle for the recognition of our rights.

Pacifism, non-violence, non-injury, or ahimsa- as Gandhi terms it- are all words indicating what we must avoid in our social and political relationships, if we are to build a global community. The avoidance of the infliction of injury, however, is not merely a negative achievement in spite of the negative prefix. The way of pacifism is a new way of being which

imparts a new strength to those who enter it. Pacifism offers a new way of dealing with fear, anxiety, and danger.

27.6 EXERCISES

1) For whom is the religion of non-violence meant?

2) How can the purification of 'self be achieved?

3) What is the meaning of 'passive resistance'?

4) What is tlie objective of 'satyagraha'?

UNIT 28 COMMUNITARIANISM AND CIVIC REPUBLICANISM

Structure

28.1 Introduction

28.2 Communitarianism: An Introduction

28.3 The Value of Community Membership

28.4 The Communitarian Position on State Neutrality

28.5 Civic Republicanism: An Introduction

28.6 The Idea of Republican Freedom

28.7 The Idea of Republican Government

28.8 Summary

28.9 Exercises

28.1 INTRODUCTION

The major concern of this unit is to introduce, understand and compare the communitarian and civic republican perspectives in political theory. These perspectives have gained considerable importance and acceptance in contemporary political theory. Such importance and acceptance may be explained on two grounds: firstly, both these perspectives contain different forceful and somewhat valid critiques of the political tradition of liberal individualism – a tradition that has occupied a dominant position in modem political thinking and political practice; and secondly, through their critiques, these perspectives develop meaningful and seemingly relevant alternative conceptualizations of such political ideas as freedom, justice and the relationship between the citizen and the state.

Since communitarianism and civic republicanism are essentially critiques of, and present themselves as alternatives to, liberal individualism, it would be helpful to begin with an interpretive summary of the liberal individualist perspective in political theory. It may be mentioned that an elaborate and thorough treatment of this perspective is given in other units of this course. In this unit, our attempt would be limited to an understanding of some of its main arguments, which would in turn facilitate our understanding of communitarianism as well as civic republicanism.

Liberal individualism is essentially one of the many theories of the nature of self, the relationship between the citizen and the state and the proper scope of state activities. Some of its main advocates include Thomas Hobbes, John Locke, Adam Smith, Jeremy Bentham, J.S.Mill, David Ricardo, Herbert Spencer and more recently, John Rawls, F.A. Hayek and Robert Nozick. These political thinkers have offered ideas and arguments, which though different and sometimes conflicting, combine to constitute what is labeled as tlie liberal individualist perspective.

Some of the main principles of liberal individualism are universalism, egalitarianism, secularism and the separation between the public and the private. However, what distinguishes this perspective from many others is its support and advocacy of the principle of individualism, Individualism is a principle that recognizes and respects the individual as the primary unit of social and political theory

and explanation. An individual is one who is free, rational and capable of self-detennination. People are rational in that they are the best judges of their interest; they are capable of self-determination in that they are capable of determining their own conception of the good; and are free in that they possess the ability as well as the right to question their participation in existing social practices and opt out of them, should these practices seem no longer worth pursuing. On this account, individuals possess the ability to detach themselves or step back from any particular social practice and choose whether they want to continue pursuing it or not. The individual, in other words, is prior to and stands at a distance from his/her cultural and community identities and values. Rawls expresses this argument in the following phrase: 'the self is prior to the ends, which are affirmed by it'.

Since people are free, rational and capable of seif-determination, their interests are better promoted by letting them choose for themselves what sort of life they want to lead. Individual interests are harmed by any attempt on the part of the state to enforce a particular view of the good life. The primary value in a liberal political order, in other words, is the neutrality of the state. A neutral state may be defined as a state, which does not favour, protect, promote or contrarily discriminate against or penalize any particular individual conception of the good. Rather, such a state provides a neutral framework within which different and potentially conflicting conceptions of the good can be pursued. In fact, from the liberal individualist standpoint, a free and just state is one which remains neutral and equally tolerant of the different conceptions of the good life held by its individual citizens, without promoting or penalizing any of such conceptions.

What then, according to liberal individualism, are the legitimate functions of the state? In the liberal individualistic view, people possess natural or pre-political freedom: state is not a natural entity; rather it is an artificial, but a necessary construct; a necessary evil. Since freedom is natural to the individual, the function of the state should mainly be that of guaranteeing and protecting individual freedom. The state, in other words, is a mechanism for safeguarding the personal security and political rights of citizens, who enter into political life and place themselves under external authority for the limited end of protection against unwarranted interference by others. This idea of freedom as the absence of interference by others, otherwise known as the negative conception of freedom, has dominated much of the liberal individualist tradition.

The individualist conception of the self, the idea of state neutrality and the idea of freedom as non-interference form an important, if not the basic core of the political theory of liberal individualism. While much of modern political theory and political practice has been influenced and dominated by these ideas, they have been met with strong criticism from a number of theoretical perspectives, some of which are fascism, sarvodaya, communism and feminism. Two profound critiques of the liberal individualist perspective are found in the communitarian and civic republican perspectives. As mentioned above, these perspectives not only criticize the basic premise of liberal individualism, they also put forward different compelling alternative conceptualizations of the nature of the self, the relationship between the state and the citizen and the idea of freedom.

28.2 COMMUNITARIANISM: AN INTRODUCTION

The communitarian perspective developed and became central to political theory during the 1980s with the publication of Michael Sandel's *Liberalism and the Limits of Justice (1982).* In this book, Sandel develops one of the most forceful critiques of Rawlsian liberalism, the statement of which is found in John Rawls's *A Theory of Justice* (1 *971).* Other political thinkers who have contributed to the development of communitarianism, although in different ways are Alisdair MacIntyre, Michael

Walzer, Charles Taylor and Will Kymlicka. It is worthy of mention that communitarian political thinkers are deeply inspired by the ideas of Aristotle, Hegel and Rousseau. With the development of communitarianism, the theory of liberal individualism has found it's most distinctive and rigorous challenge and critique. In fact, this critique has allowed for the development of what is now known as the 'liberal-communitarian debate' - a debate which has continued in one way or the other to inform a great deal of the study of political theory.

The debate between individualism and communitarianism centers around the question: is political reality shaped by the decisions and actions of individuals, defined as persons standing at a distance (or separate) from community bonds or is it shaped by social beings whose identity and behaviour is defined by the social groups/communities to which they belong? Should the just state be constructed from the standpoint of how to foster the well being of individuals or should it be constructed from the standpoint of how to realize an ideal community? In other words, is the basic unit of political analysis the individual or the community? In responding to this question, liberals and communitarians hold different and apparently conflicting positions. While the liberal individualists, as mentioned in the brief introduction given above, sees political reality to be shaped by the decisions and actions of free and rights-bearing individuals, communitarians emphasize the relationship between the person and the community and see this relationship to be the bedrock of political theory and practice. The liberal-communitarian debate is, therefore, essentially a debate between those who favour individual rights and autonomy and those who emphasize the bonds of community in political life.

Communitarians are first and foremost concerned with community. Two or more people may be understood to constitute a community when they share a common conception of the good and see this good as partly constitutive of their identity or selves. Such a "constitutive community" may be a close friendship, family relationship, neighbourhood or even a comprehensive political community. Communitarians insist that each of us as individuals develop our identity, talents and pursuits in life mainly in and through the context of a community. We are by nature social and cultural beings. Since the community determines and shapes individual nature, political life must start with a concern for the community, and not the individual. In other words, the locus of philosophical reflection on the ideal and just state ought to be the community and not the individual.

Communitarians criticize liberal political theory mainly for being mistakenly and irreparably individualistic. The liberal conceptions of the self and the relationship between the individual and the state are, they argue, inherently flawed, unduly limited as well as misrepresentative of the true nature of society. In the communitarian view, it is not enough to think in terms of a two-level relationship with the individual at one level and the state at the other. Groups and communities occupy an important intermediate position between the individual and the state and should be included among the kinds of rights and duty bearing units whose inter-relationships arc explored. By prioritizing the rights and freedom of individuals and by neglecting the importance and contribution of community membership to social and political life, liberal 'individualism ignores the extent to which it is the community/culture in which people live that shape who they are and the values they have. In the sections below, we examine the communitarian understanding of the value of community membership as well as its position on the idea of state neutrality.

28.3 THE VALUE OF COMMUNITY MEMBERSHIP

A great deal of communitarian thought has presented itself in terms of an espousal of the value and importance of community membership to both peoples' lives in general, and to the decisions they

make in the political sphere in particular. Such an espousal is made with an explicit reference to and a whole rejection of the individualistic conception of the self. The essence of the cornmunitarian claim is that in defining us as individuals, liberal individualism places us at a distance, infact detaches us from our social ends and conceptiorls of the good in a way that simply fails to correspond to the way in which we actually relate to these ends. Such a conception of the self, as detached and separate from social ends, is according to cornmunitarians, disputable on two grounds: first, that it devalues, discounts and downgrades the importance of community membership; and second, that it presents a flawed understanding of the relation between the self and its ends.

On the first criticism, communitarianism challenges liberal individualism for downgrading and discounting the importance of community. More specifically, they criticize individualism for ignoring the extent to which it is the society or community which people live in that shape who they are and the values they have. For communitarianism, the community is a fundamental and an irreplaceable ingredient in the good life of the person. However resilient and independent people may be, human existence outside social and community life is unthinkable as well as undesirable. People, according to communitarians, are not Robinson Crusoes able to live in complete and permanent isolation: rather they are constituted and shaped through their membership of particular communities. As human beings we are essentially members of a family, religion, tribe, race and nation, As such, rather than being distant from social and community ends and values, we have a history and are placed/positioned in specific social circumstances. The attachments and the moral engagements that derive from such community membership determine "who we are" and shape "the values we have". By ignoring the importance and contributions of community membership, liberal individualism constructs a conception of the self, which isdivorced from the social reality that constitutes it.

On the second criticism, communitarianism attacks individualism for holding a mistaken or false understanding of the relationship between the self and its ends - one that sees individual ends and conceptions of the good to be formed independently and prior to society. As briefly discussed above, liberal individualism regards 'the self to be prior to its ends' in the sense that individuals reserve the right to question, revise and reject their most deeply held convictions about the nature of the good life, if these are found to be no longer worth pursuing.

Criticizing the liberal individualist conception of the relationship between the self and its ends, communitarians ask whether we can really step back from particular values that we have arid change them for new ones, or are we rather made the very people that we are by the values that we endorse so that detachment is impossible? Human beings, they argue, are essentially social beings. As such, we neither choose nor reject our social and community ends and attachments; rather we discover them. We are neither free nor standing at a distance from our social and community ends; instead, we find ourselves located/situated in them. For instance, we do not choose our family, caste or nation; we find ourselves located in them. We then determine our conception of the good and ends given our place, position and situation in a family, religion and nation. According to communitarianism we are never free from all social roles and community identities. Our membership of social groups and communities determine and constitute our identity and understanding of the good life. We cannot always stand back and opt out of social relations and community membership. Our social relations and roles, or at least some must be taken as given. As Sandel notes 'I can interpret the meaning of the roles I find myself in, but I cannot reject the roles themselves, or the goals internal to them as worthless. Since these goals are constitutive of me as a person, they have to be taken as given in deciding what to do with my life; the question of good in my life can only be a question of how best to interpret their meaning. It makes no sense to say that

they have no value for me, since there is no 'me' standing behind them, no self prior to their ends or constitutive attachments. The self is constituted by and not prior to its ends'.

In this way communitarians denounce the ahistorical, asocial and disembodied conception of the individual self. According to them, this conception overlooks the ways in which it is the kind of society in which people live that affect their understanding, both of themselves and of how they should lead their lives. A valuable life, they argue, is one that is filled with commitments and relations: and what makes them commit is precisely that they are not the sort of things that people can or ought to question every day.

In the communitarian perspective then, to accept the individualisticconception of the self is to see oneself as disembodicd, detached and sharing a voluntary relationship with one's social ends and attachments. They oppose this voluntaristic picture of the relationship between the self and its ends for ignoring the extent to which we are embedded or situated and partially constituted by social roles and community membership. Sandel criticizes this conception of the self for being "unencumbered". Alternatively, he advances the notion of the "situated self', the self or subject who is invariably a member of a community and whose well being rests on the good of his/her community. For Sandel, as for other communitarians, the common good of the community is prior to the rights of the individuals

28.4 THE COMMUNITARIAN POSITION ON STATE NEUTRALITY

An equally important concern of the communitarian perspective has been to discern the nature and legitimate scope of the state. In addressing this concern, communitarians develop an understanding which is different, and in conflict with the dominant liberal idea of the state. As briefly mentioned above, liberal individualists identify a just state as a minimal and neutral political authority, the functions of which are limited to the protection of individual rights and the maintenance of law and order. The state, rather than interfering in tlic determination of the good, ought to be equally tolerant ofdifferent conceptions of the good, without promoting and/or penalizing any of such conceptions.

In furnishing their understandingof the nature of the state, communitarians offer a strong critique of the idea of state neutrality. According to them, the view that the state should bc value-neutral, whereby individuals are left free to make their own choices stems from an atomistic belief that autonomy is protected only when judgements about tlie good life arc taken out of the political realm and made on an individual (private) basis. Rejecting such "atomism", communitarians argue that, in reality, individual judgements require the sharing ofexperiences. the give and take ofcollective deliberation and the collective evaluation of shared practices. In other words, peoples' choices about the good life can only be exercised in a particular sort of community and not a cultural marketplace guided by freedom and neutrality, of the type guaranteed by liberal individualism.

In advancing an alternative account, of the nature of tlie slate, communitarians argue for the abandonment of liberal neutrality in favour of the politics of the common good. The common good is conceived as a substantive conception of tlie good life, which defines the community way of life as well as provides stan ards from which individual preferences and values are evaluated. In other words, the common good forms the basis on which different conceptions of the good are ranked. The weight given to an individual's conception then depends on how much it corresponds to or deviates from the common good.

The common good, communitarians believe, is required not only for guiding people's decisions about the good life, but also for establishing a just and legitimate political community. According to Taylor, the common good is required to vindicate and make legitimate the justice-demands of a welfare state. At the heart of the theory of justice in a welfare state is the claim that those privileged ought to sacrifice a portion of their rights and rewards for the sake of others (the underprivileged). For instance, in a liberal capitalist society, the propertied are required to sacrifice some of their property (derived in the form of taxes) for the benefit of the non-propertied and for sustaining a just society. According to Taylor, claims for such a sacrifice in an individualistic society would seem improper, if not unjust, as we would be required to sacrifice our rights/property for the sake of those with whom we share no community identity or common way of life. If we are distanced from a community or shared way of life, we would necessarily be unwilling to shoulder such justice-demands of a welfare state. Justice, communitarians argue, is rooted in a community whose primary bond is the shared understanding of the good. A just state then, is not one that remains neutral towards all individual conceptions of the good: rather it is one which encourages its citizens to adopt conceptions of the good that agree with the common good, while discouraging conceptions of the good that conflict with it.

In the communitarian view then. the guarantee of a free and just state is deeply intertwined with the well being of the community. The ideal state is one that employs its power and authority to encourage the continuation and health of those cultural traditions and values that serve to determine the common good. Communitarianism, thus, endows the state with a positive function of promoting the common good, rather than merely with a negative function of ensuring an absence of interference in the realm of individual rights. It is worthy of mention that a number of political theorists in India are influenced by and draw from the arguments of the communitarian perspective.

So far we have concentrated on the communitarian perspective in political theory. In the following sections, we examine the main ideas and arguments of the civic republican tradition and attempt to compare this tradition with the communitarian perspective.

28.5 CIVIC REPUBLICANISM: AN INTRODUCTION

Civic republican political theory takes its starting point from a long established tradition of thinking about politics – a tradition that is understood to have contributed significantly to the development of democracy. This tradition is associated with such political thinkers as Aristotle, Cicero, Guicciardini, Machiavelli, James Harrington and Rousseau as well as with the many commonwealth theorists of the 18th century. In recent times this tradition has been defended and developed by Hannah Arendt, John Pocock, Quentin Skinner and Philip Pettit, among others.

The term republicanism is defined and understood in contrast with monarchy or the personal rule of kings and emperors. Whereas a monarch enjoys personal authority over his subjects and rules his realm as his personal possession and more or less to realize his personal interests, government in a republic is, in principle, the common business of the citizens conducted by them for realizing the common good. The idea of republicanism, thus, develops from a desire and the attempt to replace 'the empire of men with the empire of law'.

The civic republican perspective begins by adopting some of the important ideas of Greek political thought. Infact, civic republicanism begins, as does Greek political thinking, from the premise that man is by nature a social-political animal. Men, however, are also moral beings as they embody certain moral purposes. Naturally therefore, and in order to realize their interests and develop their

true selves, men must live together in a political association, more specifically in a self-governing political community. A self-governing political community is one in which citizens participate to realize the good of both the individual as well as the collective. In a republic then, citizens are essentially virtuous as they place tlie common good above their particular individual goods. To put in a nutshell, a good polity is an association of good citizens, good citizens being those who possess the quality of civic virtue or the predisposition to seek the good of all in public matters. To use Aristotle's words, the end of a political community "is the good life and the good in politics is the common interest".

Underlying and contributing to the civic republican ideal of a good polity are somewhat distinct ideas of freedom and government – ideas, which republicans conclude, go beyond and are deeper than tlie dominant liberal notions of freedom and government. It is this distinctiveness which, they believe, makes civic republicanism a compelling theory of political order and freedom. Below, we examine the civic republican ideas of freedom and government.

28.6 THE IDEA OF REPUBLICAN FREEDOM

At the heart of civic republicanism is a distinct and supposedly rich idea of freedom. According to republican theorists, this idea of freedom contributes to the discourse on freedom by going beyond tlie traditional dominant liberal conception of freedom. To understand the distinctness and contributions of this idea, it would be helpful to give a summarized account of the traditional conceptions of freedom.

In an important work titled *Two Concepts of Liberty* (1958), Isaiah Berlin drew a distinction between what he understood to be two different conceptions of liberty, namely negative and positive liberty. The idea of liberty has since been understood with reference to this distinction. According to Berlin, the negative conception of liberty required the absence of interference by others, where interference be understood broadly to mean any intentional form of obstruction or coercion. The positive conception of liberty, alternatively, required a presence rather than an absence – the presence of self-mastery, where self-mastery is interpreted as the ability of an individual to master his passions with his reason. In 1988, Benjamin Constant, in a famous lecture titled, "The Liberty of the Ancients and the Liberty of the Moderns" developed the distinction between negative and positive liberty: while the 'liberty of the moderns' was identified with the negative conception of liberty, defined as the absence of interference, the 'liberty of the ancients' was defined differently, yet positively as the right of the individual to participate in the process of democratic self-determination. It is worthy of mention that the liberal political tradition has been dominated by the negative conception of freedom as non-interference.

According to tlie civic republican tradition, the distinction between negative and positive freedom, between the liberty of the ancients and the liberty of the moderns, fails to capture the true essence and value of freedom. As an alternative, republican theorists develop and advocate the idea of republican freedom. Republican freedom, they argue, although akin to the traditional distinction, transcends it to deliver a richer and more valid account of freedom. As noted by Pettit, "the republican conception of liberty is akin to the negative one in maintaining that what liberty requires is the absence of something, not necessarily the presence. It is akin to the positive conception in holding that that which must be absent has to do with mastery rather than with interference. Freedom consists, not in the presence of self-mastery, and not in the absence of interference by others. but rather in the absence of mastery by others: in the absence ... of domination. Freedom just is non-domination".

Underlying the republican notion of freedom as non-domination is an understanding of the meaning of domination as well as its relationship with interference. Domination, as understood by the republicans, is the ability and capacity of one agent to exercise power over the other, particularly the power of arbitrary interference. In other words, a person is dominated by an other, and thereby unfree, to the extent that the other has the capacity to interfere on an arbitrary basis in his/her affairs. Such a relationship of domination is exemplified in the relationship between master and slave/servant, employer and employee and even husband and wife, where the dominant agent interferesarbitrarily in the affairs of the other, thereby restricting the freedom of the other. According to civic republicans, the distinction between negative and positive liberty fails to address the denial of freedom as domination. It is such indifference to the notion of domination as adenial of freedom that allowed liberals to remain for long tolerant of relationships of dominance at home and in workplaces.

The relationship between domination and interference, according to republicans. is deeper as wel1 as more problematic than is apparent. Domination, as they argue, can be experienced and exercised without actual interference. such as experienced by the lucky slave. Contrarily, interference can be practiced without real domination such as in the case of a good polity, which interferes in the lives of the citizens to promote their welfare and wel1 being. It is, therefore, possible to have domination without interference just as it is possible to have interference without domination. What we need to protect ourselves from is not all forms of interference, but only those forms of interference, which are of an arbitrary dominating nature.

On this ground, the negative conception of freedom as non-interference appears insufficient as it fails to distinguish between desirable and arbitrary forms of interference. It ignores the extent to which interference may in some cases contribute to the sustenance and promotion of individual freedom and welfare. The Indian State, for instance, interferes in the freedom of its citizens, in different ways, such as to ban certain evil practicessanctioned by religious custom, like untouchability andsati, as well as to provide certain specific rights and welfare in the form of affirmative action to the underprivileged sections of society. In fact most states. if not all, interfere in the economic life of their citizens through policies of taxation, which is then employed for the distribution ofwelfare goods such as health, education and housing, among many others. By defining freedom simply as non-interference, political theory would indeed be insufficiently placed in justifying such necessary acts of interference by the state. The idea of republican freedom as noti-dominationgives space for such laws, which although do interfere, do not enslave or dominate but rather free one from domination and subjugation by others.

As mentioned above, the negative conception of freedom as non-interference follows from the liberal understanding of freedom as natural and the state as a necessary evil. For the republicans, in contrast, the cause of freedom rests squarely with the law and the state. The laws of a good state – a republic, create the freedom enjoyed by citizens; they do not offend against that freedom. The state, in this view, is not antagonistic to civic Freedom: rather it is "freedom-friendly". To use Harrington's words, *'liberty, in the proper sense, is liberty by the laws, not liberty from the laws".

It may be noted that-with the idea of freedom as non-domination, civic republicanism tends to agree with the conception of people as situated in certain communities and cultures rather than with the individualistic conception of the self as detached and disembodied. Doruination is often associated with certain cultural markers such as gender, race, religion and class among others. A person facing domination is more likely to belong to a vulnerable class. Freedom as non-domination can be enjoyed and guaranteed only in so far as the salient groups to which these people belong enjoy it.

Upholding the republican idea of freedom, Pettit argues. that it is only when the idea of freedom as non-interference is replaced with that of freedom as lion-domination would the political theory and practice of such struggles as feminism, multiculturalism and environmentalism gain recognition and response. Infact. it is argued that the republican notion of freedom went out of fashion in the 18th century, when citizenship was extended beyond tlic realm of propertied males, and when it was no longer possible to think of making all citizens, particularly women and servants, free in the republican sense. Freedom, if guaranteed to all, had to bc less demanding.

It may not be incorrect to argue that under-lying the republican idea of freedom as non-domination is a value of equality, whereby no one is dominated by, and thus unequal to the other. Freedom requires the capacity of each individual to stand as an equal with fellow citizens in a shared awareness tliat no one has tlie power of arbitrary interference over tlic other. The idea of republican freedom appears to be somewhat more compatible with and wel I-disposed to the ideas of democracy, welfare and empowerment – ideas that have gained currency and importance in contemporary political theory and practice.

28.7 THE IDEA OF REPUBLICAN GOVERNMENT

Based on the republican idea of freedom as non-domination is the idea of republican government. Freedom as non-domination, as republicans believe, would be achieved only when each citizen feels that he/she is not being ruled or dominated by tlie power of others, but by his/her own interests. As such, republican freedom is the desire not to rule but rather not to be ruled. This, republicans believe, necessitates a different and a more inclusive idea of government. Below, we examine the idea of a republican government.

Underlying the idea of the republican government are the principle of'civic virtue, the idea of common good and the notion of active civic participation. The republican idea oi'civic virtue may be understood as the willingness to set the common good above one's own or family's interests. Infact, the idea of citizens being virtuous is an integral part of the tradition of civic republicanism. Civic republicanism, in a similar vein with communitarians, requires that wc as citizens place the common good above our particular individual interests. For it is only by placing the common good -- the good of all – above our private interests that we would guarantee and realize the value of freedom as non-domination. Republicans emphatically claim tliat without civic virtue, the republic wi ll degenerate into a battlefield of rival intcrests.

While the republican doctrine lays great stress on tlie fundamental importance of civic virtue, it lays equal stress on the fragility of virtue - the danger that a people or its leaders would become corrupt, thereby threatening the republic. Civic republicans are cautious of the state officials exercising power in an arbitrary way, thereby denying republican freedom. I-low then can the state and its officials be prevented from exercising power in an arbitrary way? Republicans also recognize that people do not make up a perfectly harmonious or homogenous body with identical interests; rather they are divided on the basis of interests. Such division of interests could translate into a major threat to both civic virtue and the republic. I-low then should a republic be organized so as to reconcile the different conflicting interests in society?

It is to guard against such threats to the republic that civic republicanism advocates a number of measures. the most important of which is active civic participation. Active civic participation, republicans argue, is essentially 'the price of liberty' – the tool with which citizens can place an eternal vigilance on the government and its officials. Active participation ensures that a powerful

group or citizen does not dominate or violate the freedom of others by taking control of the government. Infact, active civic participation is understood to be a prerequisite and a condition for the guarantee of republican freedom.

The republican idea of citizenship, however, ought to be contrasted with tlie liberal ideaofcitizenship: while the latter regards citizenship as a right passively enjoyed by citizens who desire freedom from external restraints, tlie former identifies citizenship with those rights which empower citizens with tlie freedom to actively engage with other citizens under conditions and in pursuance of freedom and equality. Citizenship, in the republican view, is an office and a responsibility that is proudly assumed by citizens. To be a citizen in a republic is to be a self-governing member of a self-governing community.

In addition to civic participation, civic republicanism argues in favour of constitutionalism as a measure to guard against threats to republican virtue. The task of civic republicanism is to design a constitution that would reflect and balance tlie diverse interests in society. The British Constitution is often cited as an example of such a balance wherein the interests ofone – the monarch, the few – the aristocracy, and the many – the common people, are balanced in the mixed government of tlie Crown, tlie House of Lords and the House of Commons. The idea of a separation of powers among the legislature, tlie executive and the judiciary is also identified as an equally important guard. According to republican theorists, the concentration of powers in tlie hands of one person or group is the most potent source of domination and subjugation of others.

The advocacy of the ideas of civic virtue, common good, active civic citizenship, mixed constitutions and separation of powers make up an important, if not tlie core of the idea of republican government. Understandably then, civic republicanism is seen to be complementary if not in support of the idea of democracy. It is with these ideas of government as well as with the idea of freedom as non-domination that republicans aim at replacing 'the empire of men with tlie empire of laws'.

28.8 SUMMARY

In the sections above, we have examined, separately though, two important perspectives in contemporary political theory, namely communitarianism and civic republicanism. In this section and by way of concluding this unit, we make a comparative assessment of these perspectives by highlighting the ideas on which they complement and differ from each other. We also attempt to bring out some of the strengths and weaknesses of these two perspectives.

To begin with, we look at the points of complementarity between tliese two perspectives. As mentioned above, both communitarianism and civic republicanism contain forceful critiques and compelling alternatives lo the ideas of liberal individualism. Firstly, they both begin by characterizing humans as social and political animals who in order to realize their interests and lead good lives ought to live in association with one another. Secondly, both perspectives criticize the liberal individualist conception of the self as a self detached and disembodied from its ends: while for the communitarians this conception is unreal, the republicans see it to be undesirable for the establishment of a good and free polity. Thirdly, both endow tlie state with a positive rather than a negative role. In fact a just state, according to both perspectives, rather than being neutral, is one that protects and promotes the common good. Finally, both communitarianism and civic republicanism see the community and cultural membership as playing on important role in determining the choices that we make in the public sphere: while communitariansare more candid about tlie centrality of community membership to individual choices,

civic republicans make a more subtle statement when they advocate the idea of freedom as non-domination.

An important difference between these perspectives is that while the communitarians reject the possibility of a neutral state, civic republicanism advocates the possibility of a state, which transcends religious and other related divides,

Indeed, both communitarianism and civic republicanism make equally, although somewhat different important and compelling contributions to political theory. Some of such contributions are the communitarian understanding of the relationship between the person and the community, the importance of community membership and values in the determination of peoples' choices, the critique of the idea of state neutrality, the republican idea of freedom as non-domination, the nuanced understanding of the relationship between domination and interference and the emphasis an civic virtue and participation.

While the communitarian and civic republican perspectives are recognized for the contributions they make to contemporary political theory, they have been criticized by some political theorists, particularly liberal individualists. According to these political theorists, by prioritizing community membership, communitarians undervalue the importance of individual rights and autonomy. Infact they leave the individual a hostage to the will and good of the community, which could, and often does reduce the space of individual freedom and choice. The idea of a common good is criticized on the grounds that such a good is difficult to determine in societies that are characterized by dcrp pluralism. Infact if determined, the idea of the common good can have conservative and repressive connotations, mainly because it would provide a standard from which individual conceptions of the good would be judged and thereby, advanced or eliminated. Both these perspectives. therefore, fail to see and guard against the possibility of the common good becoming a perpetrator of domination and injustice.

To conclude it may be appropriate to say that for us in India, an understanding of the communitarian and civic republican perspectives is relevant in terms of both political theory and political practice. On one hand. wc need to understand and assess the different contributions made by these perspectives in their critique of liberal individualism as well as of the alternative principles they advocate. On the other hand, we need to relate these contributions and alternative principles to our present political practice.

28.9 EXERCISES

1) What do you understand by communitarianism? Explain in your own words,

2) Discuss the value of community membership.

3) Examine the communitarian position on state neutrality.

4) Write an essay on civic republicanism.

5) Discuss tlie ideas of republican freedom and government.

UNIT 29 POLITICAL THEORY IN A GLOBALISING WORLD

Structure

29.1 Introduction

29.2 How does Political Theory Evolve?

29.3 Binaries in Political Theory: Liberalism and Marxism

29.4 Modernism and Post-Modernism

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29.6 Globalization and Identity Politics

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29.11 State vs. Civil Society

29.12 Ethnic Cleavages

29.13 New Dimensions in tlie Theory of Federalism

29.14 Summary

29.15 Exercises

29.1 INTRODUCTION

The disintegration of socialist states in European Europe culminating in the break-up of the mighty Soviet Union marks tlie triumph of liberal ism over socialism, democracy over one-party rule and *laissez faire* economies over centralized economy. The bipolar world has given way to a unipolar world. In tlie wake of these developments, the world is witnessing fundamental changes in the form of liberalization, privatization and globalization. The trade barriers among the states arc getting blurred and a globalized market is emerging. In centralized and mixed economies, the process of disinvestment and structural adjustments is leading to the shrinking of the public sector. How will these epochal changes manifest themselves in tlie form of newer concerns in Political Theory is an important question that needs to be considered.

29.2 HOW DOES POLITICAL THEORY EVOLVE?

At tlie very outset, we must understand as to how political theory emerges in any historical phase. For example, why did Plato advocate the idea of an Ideal State and the rille of the Philosopher-King? Why did lie propound his Theory of Education? Why did Thomas Hobbes give his theory about the State of Nature and the Social Contract? Wliy did he favour tlie idea of an absolute sovereign? Similarly, one may aslc the question as to why Marx criticized capitalism'? Why did he plead for socialism and communism? Why did Gandhi condemn the Western industrial society ancl consurnel-ism that it promoted?

If we carefully consider all these questions, we will find that a political thinker does not write in a vacuum. He addresses himself to the basic concerns of his times. Every political theorist begins to feel agitated about certain maladies in the society in which he lives and wants to find out remedies for these maladies. Thus, Plato's Ideal State is his response to the rotten state of Athens in which he lived. He came to tlie conclusion that all rulers in the Greek city states were corrupt and incompetent. Therefore, lie suggested the rule of the Philosopher king who would have reason dominant in him. He gave his theory of education to ensure that the future generations of Athens would have sound mind and sound body. Thomas Hobbes was worried at the violent and law-less conditions prevailing in sixteenth century England. He also saw the irrelevance of the theory of Divine Rights of Kings. I-lence, he advocated tlie theory of social contract and favoured the idea of an absolute sovereign who could defend people's life, liberty and property. Similarly, Karl Marx was full of anguish at the miserable conditions of the working class in nineteenth century Europe. This class was suffering intense exploitation under capitalisni, Therefore, he urged this class to rise in revolt and overthrow the capitalist system. He believed tliat in the socialist society, this exploitation would come to an end. Likewise, Gandhi saw the de-humanizing impact of industrialization which, lie thought, was also causing immense harm to physical nature. He also realized the ill-effects of greed and consumerism that materialism promoted. Therefore, he advocated an humane political order based on truth and non-violence, a social order rooted in spiritualism and communitarianism and an economic order whose cardinal principles were bread-labour and trusteeship.

The above illustrations make it clear that every political theorist addresses himself to certain key issues and problems tliat tlie society of his times is facing. In short, *political theory in every epoch of history has been the response of the political thinker.to the prevailing political and social conditions*. In fact, one can go to tlie extent of saying that all major political theories have emerged in situations when societies were standing at the cross-roads of history and liad to make hard-choices. The era ofglobalization is undoubtedly a moment in history when societies have chosen (or have been forced to choose) a certain course for themselves whose consequences will be far-reaching. The question that must be considered and answered is: What will be the nature of political tlieory that will evolve in the era ofglobalization? How will political theorists respond to the phenomenon ofglobalization? What questions and concerns will be central to them? What impact will globalization have on state, society and tlie individual? What sort of local, national and international order (or disorder) will emerge as a consequenceof liberalization, privatization and globalization?

29.3 BINARIES IN POLITICAL THEORY: LIBERALISM AND MARXISM

Before we spell out the nature ofpolitical theory in the era of globalization, it is necessary for us to understand tlie binary nature of *modern* and *contemporary* political tlieory out of which it will emerge. There are mainly two grand ideological designs in modern political theory: Liberalism and Marxism. The liberal political theory emphasizes democratic governance where the people can articulate their problems and choices. It stands for universal human rights. It is wedded to the promotion of common good and it holds two human values–Liberty and Equality–as primary; although liberty often gets priority over equality. Marxism, on the other hand, highlights the fact that all human societies are class-based societies consisting of the exploiters and the exploited. These two classes are constantly at war with each other and this war will consummate in a revolution leading to the final victory of the exploited class which will pave the way for the emergence of a class-less and stateless society. In short, modern political theory is concerned with universal goals

like Justice, Liberty and Equality. It attempts to identify the institutional structures of domination and tries to evolve strategies to demolish them.

It is, however, evident that these goals of liberal and Marxist theory were never realized, at least not fully. In liberal democracies, the participation of people remained only marginal and ruling power got concentrated in the hands of the political elite. This phenomenon has been aptly described as the "iron law of oligarchy". The socialist societies, on the other hand, witnessed excessive centralization of power in the hands of the communist party leadership. The exploitation of the workers not only continued, but in some cases it became more intense. The inequalities within liberal as well as socialist societies became more acute. Human rights did not reach the disadvantaged stratas of society in full measure. Thus, the grand utopian and normative vision of Liberal and Marxist theory aiming at liberty, equality and harmony remained unfulfilled. The inequalities among different countries also increased. These failures of Liberal and Marxist theory alike gave rise to *the New* Right and the *New Left* movements on the one hand and generated a sense of cynicism and nihilism, on the other.

29.4 MODERNISM AND POST-MODERNISM

In recent years, an alternative to both these strands of modern political theory has appeared in the form of Post-Modernism. The post-modernists challenge liberalism for its *abstract* categories – categories like the universal rights of all people and emphasize the rights of *specific groups* – women, tribals, blacks and tlie colonial people etc. This has led to the emergence of *New Social Movements* which challenge specific forms of social domination based on gender, caste, colour and race. *Identity politics* has become the most crucial element in these movements. It also marks a shift from macro abstract political, social and economic issues to *culture*. The basic argument of identity politics is that individuals define themselves mainly as belonging to a given cultural group which perceives itself as disadvantaged and oppressed at the hands of groups which are privileged and dominant – males, upper castes, white races and tlie imperialist countries. The relevant binary categories in identity policies become "we" and "they". It is important to note that in practical terms, this new political theory of idcntity politics tantamounts to rejecting the Marxian category of "class" as a major tool of analysis. It, equally vehemently, negates liberalism's universal categories like "universal rights", "civil liberties" and "equality". Instead of the mega "class war" of Marxian variety, it emphasizes "local struggles". Instead of advocating power to tlie working class, it advocates empowerment of the local communities and specific cultural groups.

29.5 EPISTEMOLOGICAL SHIFT

In epistemological terms, this new political tlieory of tlie "post-modernist" variety negates three basic methodological tenets of modern political theory: *holism/universalism, essentialism* and *reductionism*. It is difficult to explain the full import of these terms. Briefly, we may say that *holism* or *universalism* privileges the understanding of the *whole* rather than the understanding of the *parts* tliat constitute the whole. Thus, it talks in terms of macro instead of micro phenomena. *Essentialism* underscores the importance of comprehending the general essence of the phenomenon rather the mere *appearance* of it. *Reductionism* in modern political theory refers to the tendency of reducing all analyses and explanations of a phenomenon to a *single* element or a single factor. For example, in classical Marxism all economic divisions and all social and political hierarchies are reduced to "class" and the "economic factor" is considered as the only factor that determines the course of history. Thereby, the role of "ideas" and "cultural identities" gets totally ignored or

considerably under-played in modern political theory. The post- nodem mist political thinking, on the other hand, not only highlights "*particulalrism*", but also emphasizes the relevance of *several* factors in comprehending a phenomenon. Instead of "elite" history (of Carlylian variety), it stands for "mass" history and subaltern studies. Instead of 'history from above', it is wedded to the idea of 'history from below'. Post-tnodernism also has its own specific emancipatory agenda. Rejecting modern political theory's thrust for a systemic change, post-modernism stands for the emancipation of specific groups. Likewise, instead of universal rights, it addresses itself to the rights ofspecific groups – women, gays, lesbians, tribals, aboriginals, blacks and other disadvantaged groups. Infact, one can notice similar modernist and post-modernist streaks in the process of globalization. On the one hand, its thrust is on globalization of capital and primacy of the market and on the other, it stands for localization of labour.

29.6 GLOBALIZATION AND IDENTITY POLITICS

Having discussed the Liberal and Marxist strands of modern political theory and having indicated how both of them have been challenged by post-modernism, it is now time to try to conjure up some of the contours ofpolitical theory in the era ofglobalization. Identity politics is emerging as one of the most central aspects of Political Theory. Two important dimensions of this question of identity politics are important. First, that identities are multiple: a woman has a gender identity, but she also belongs to a *caste*, a *religion*, a *community*, an *occupational group*, a *region* and a *linguistic* groupetc. In fact, she has all these identities. What post-modernism tries to do is to privilege her gender identity over her other identities. While identity politics will remain relevant in the era of globalization, the issue as to which particular identity would become primary and which ones will become secondary will be contingent on the way globalization and market Forces affect different segments of human society in different countries. Secondly, all identities are socially constituted and the way these get constituted in the era ofglobalization will determine the broad nature of political theory that will emerge.

There is another dimension of globalization. It will undoubtedly multiply the material desires and wants of the individual, but it will find it difficult to satisfy them fully. But even if we assume for the sake of argument that globalization will be able to satisfy all the material wants and desires of all the individuals, the question still remains whether it will be able to bring about the "good life". Here, Aristotelian emphasis on nicomachean ethics becomes crucial. Will globalization create good citizens; citizens who are virtuous, citizens who are moral beings. After all, it is only good citizens who would make a good state and it is only a good state which will make good citizens. As Aristotle has pointed out (in a different context) the state came into being for the sake of *life*, but continues for the sake of *good life*. This question has become extremely relevant in political theory in the era of globalization. How will globalization affect the virtues and values of *Justice, Freedom and Equality* which all human societies have cherished in all ages? Will it intensify Social Darwinism (survival of the fittest)?. Will the degeneration of the environment lead to greater happiness or more miseries? These are the some of the questions which will become increasingly relevant in political theory in the era of globalization.

29.7 SYNTHESIS IN POLITICAL THEORY

It is not possible to neatly state the exact nature of' political theory in the era of globalization. However, if one were to rely on the logic *of dialectics* in *history*, then one can say with some degree of certainty that political theory in the era of globalization will exhibit at one level, a

synthesis of Liberalism and Marxism. At another level, it will exhibit a synthesis of modern political theory and post-modernist trends and tendencies. While the nature ofpolitical theory in the era of globalization will be contingent on the emerging *local*, national and global conditions, it will demonstrate some sort of amalgam of the *universal* and the *particular*, theglobal and the *local* the *macro* and the *micro*, *unity* and *difference*, order and disorder and *community* and chaos. The issue of social justice might occupy the center stage in the midst ofgrowing inequality and poverty that globalization necessarily entails. Democracy may become more participatory. The state may become weaker in some respects and stronger in other respects.

29.8 WELFARE STATE vs. MINIMAL STATE

We are aware that in the course of about last one hundred and fifty years, the earlier theory of state whose concern was only to maintain law and order (the police state) has yielded place slowly, but surely to a welfare state which has taken up wide ranging functions like health, education and well-being of the citizens. The critical question in political theory in the era of globalization is, whether or not the liberal and democratic state will continue to follow public policies aimed at the welfare of those who are suffering social and economic deprivation.

The present day welfare state has become what may be called a *maximal* state. It seems that in the wake of liberalization, privatization and globalization, some of the welfare functions of the modern welfare state may shrink. While tlie future state will continue to perform regulatory functions, its *distributive* functions, are likely to become less and less. In fact, the state might become (to use Robert Nozick's term) a *minimal state*. The philosophy of utilitarianism with its focus on the greatest happiness of the greatest number, which has been the linch-pin of the modern welfare state will no more remain the guiding principle of the future state. Given the individualist (Lockean) majoritarian under pinning of liberal democracy, the state will liave to buy legitimacy for itself at periodic elections and, therefore, it will find it very difficult to altogether give up the welfare functions. Thus, we can say that political theory in tlie era of globalization will reflect the *structural ambivalence of modern state* and the tensions and paradoxes, pulls and pushes inherent in politics as it operates under the sway of market forces.

29.9 THE BLURRING OF STATE SOVEREIGNTY

We know that one of the key elements of state, as it is understood in Political Theory, is sovereignty which implies that tlie state is internally *supreme* and *externally independent*. The state in the era of liberalisation will be one in which sovereignty will no more remain as sacrosanct as earlier. The world will increasingly become a global village and a global market. In this scenario, the external aspect of state sovereignty will get compromised at best and will become a myth at worst. In several respects, the state will not remain externally independent. It will have to tailor its behaviour according to the norms decided globally for all the states either by world organizations like the IMF, the World Bank or the United Nations or by the various global coalitions and regional groups – *a* la European Union. The way UN weapon inspectors have been sent to carry out inspection in Iraq to make sure that it does not possess any weapons of mass destruction is a case in point. The way global peace-keeping forces are controllingthe belligerence of states in different parts of the world or the way some ramshackle global coalitions are trying to tame the behaviour of certain states illustrates the diminishing external sovereignty of the state.

Another dimension of sovereignty relates to the internal supremacy of the state over all individuals and groups. This Austinian theory of sovereignty, which is a monist theory has already come under attack at the hands of pluralists. In the era of globalization, this attack will increasingly manifest in the form of denial to the national majority, the claim to be the sole legitimate expression of sovereignty of the people. The internal sovereigntyof the modem state will be replaced by more diffuse sovereign power of the state, on the one hand and of its constituent entities on the other, in the form of rights ofdifferent social groups and the rights of the federating units.

29.10 ROLE OF WTO, MULTI-NATIONALS AND NGOS

The role of the state, its internal supremacy and its monopoly of power to take decisions on political, economic and social issues is being jeopardized by the ever expanding role of the multinationals. The structural adjustment that states all over the world are being compelled to make under the aegis of the WTO regime and the World Bank has led to a situation where no state can claim to be internally supreme today as it was earlier. Political Theory in the era of globalization, will have to address itself to these shifts. The modem state is also being compelled increasingly to follow the dictates of non-governmental organizations (NGOs). This is, particularly, so in matters relating to collective security, human security and human rights. In addition to the environmental issues, the questions of ecological balance and sustainable development have become extremely relevant. Even the use of violence by the modern state against its own citizens is becoming increasingly open to outside and inside scrutiny by agencies like the *Amnesty International*, *Asia Watch,* UN Commission on Human Riglits and People's Union for Civil Liberties. Right to Information and Right to Development will acquire the status of fundamental rights.

29.11 STATE VS. CIVIL SOCIETY

Civil society is a civil association. Here, society or community is viewed as a service organization which enjoys autonomy, both from the polity and the economy. In its extreme form, the theory of civil society is becoming a non-state or even an anti-state variety of liberalism. The role of civil society is becoming important in the wake of participatory democratic theory. Some groups in the civil society are demanding increasing public access to justice and greater transparency in decisions taken by the various organs of government. Here, the issues of the rule *of law* and good *governance* entailing citizens' right to information also become important. All this has brought the community and civil society to the center stage displacing the state in some conventional spheres of its activity. Political Theory in the era ofglobalization will have to address itself to the phenomenon of autonomous market, shrinkingstate and assertive civil society, Increasing Public Interest Litigation (PIL) has driven various organs of governmentto the wall in many respects. For example, *Narmada Bnchao Andolan* being spearheaded by Medha Patekar and Arundhati Roy, *Chipko Movement* of Sunder Lal Bahuguna, the People's Union Tor Civil Liberties, Lok Satta, Association for Democratic Reform and Transparency International are all directed at keeping the various organs of government in reasonable limits. NGOs are emerging as a countervailing power vis-à-vis the state. The seriousness of the problem of global warming, green house gases, ozone hole are today matters of concern of all governments – democratic and authoritarian. The indiscriminate deforestation and increasing noise and air pollution has brought the basic questions of relation between man and nature, the limits to industrialization and economic growth to the fore. Political theory cannot avoid addressing itself adequately to all these questions. No state, today, can ignom or underplay the question of gender justice, the demands for empowerment of women, the rights of the child and the unborn and the issues of positive discrimination.

Political theory in the era of globalization will have to address itself to the question: how political institutions and structures condition and get conditioned by social power?

29.12 ETHNIC CLEAVAGES

In recent years, particularly after the disintegration of the world socialist bloc, the world has witnessed a series of ethnic and religious conflicts. There has been an upsurge in social strife, fundamentalism and intolerance. In the era of globalization, political theory will have to address itself to this phenomenon. The class conflict which Marx had so ably highlighted is on the back burner. It has given way to ethnic conflicts borderingon genocide in the developing world and racial hatred and hate speech in the developed world. In the unipolar world, there is an attempt by the United States which is the sole super power today to impose western culture and values on the rest of the world. Within nations, the minorities are getting marginalized. Jn this scenario, new empirical images of democracy highlighting *diversities* are likely to emerge in political tlieory. In several societies secularism as a value and as an ideal is being discounted. There is spurt in communalization, criminalization and lumpenization of democratic processes and practices. The moral residue in politics is recedingto a diminishing point. Even the image of the individual which was characterized by Aristotle as political and social animal is giving way to the individual as a consumer, as an economic animal. In the midst of this perspective ofpossessive individualism, political theory cannot afford to overlook the expanded notion of freedom where freedom is taken to imply absence of all forms of domination and simultaneous increase in opportunities for self-realization. In other words, the focus in political theory will be on maximizing individual's counter-extractive and developmental powers.

29.13 NEW DIMENSIONS IN THE THEORY OF FEDERALISM

The prevailing theories of cooperative and competitive federalism are likely to see new dimensions which will lead to newer models of federalism. Federalism is an institutional arrangement as a constitutionally established power balance between *self-rule* and *shared rule*. The crucial question is how will globalization affect the theory offederalism? Wil l globalization strengthen or weaken federalism? What will be the new dimensions in the theory of federalism? How will the globalization of markets affect the federal states? In multi-cultural and multi-national polities, there are demands for the recognition and legitimization of internal diversities. Regional and sub-regional identities are getting sharply reflected in the theory of federalism. It has already given rise to *ethnic federalism*. In other words, the nation-state federalism has to cope today with multi-ethnic challenges. With the pluralists societies being viewed as polities of identities, there will be a concomitant deciine of the nation-state. The *ethno-centric concept* of nation in political theory is gaining currency at the expense of the political concept of nation.

The nineteenth century constitutionalism has to cope with the challenge of globalization. Globalization will affect the conventional notion of federalism in the light of newer relations between federal states and their federating units with the WTO and other global institutions like the World Bank. Lidija Basta Fleiner, a renowned Swiss scholar of federalism, has aptly termed it as *"democratic control of federalized power and the federalized control of democracy"*. As a consequence of globalization political culture will reflect greater *decentralized loyalty* on one hand, and greater *supra-state loyalty* on the other; thus, the crucial issue before the theory offederalism will be to build a federal contractual equilibrium within a majoritarian democratic setting and to bring different groups together by transcending particularistic loyalties, The structural tensions which globalization

will generate will impinge on majoritarian democracy and anti-majoritarian federalism. Libertarian democracy (of Robert Nozickean type) will not itself be able to cope with the politics of group differences in the process of nation-building. It will, therefore, be structurally incapable of meeting the challenge of multi-culturalism on tlie centrality of diversities and collective rights.

In tlie established liberal democracies, there will be growth of judicial power in the wake of globalization arid this, in turn, will trigger greater concern about judicial independence. The judiciary will get more directly inter-meshed with democratic politics. This judicial transformation will have two major dimensions: strengthening the power of judicial review and adoption of political pluralism in tlie appointment process of judges. There is another implication of globalization for the theory of federal democratic states. Liberal welfare state is wedded to tlie notion of equal representation of all individuals, which is a procedural commitment lo inhospitable differences. Multi-culturalism based on diversities and collective rights of different communities is likely to be anti-thetical to globalization which will invariably intensify inequalities among and within states. Hence, the mere constitutional guarantee of equal rights alone will not be enough to ensure equality, unless it is accompanied by right to be equal irrespective of differences. This question will become increasingly crucial.

Infact, it may boil down to reconciling *equality, liberty and fraternity* as cardinal principles of the modern state with an alternative emerging paradigm which emphasizes *security, diversity and solidarity*. In short, the 19th century liberalism will have to model itself to be in tune with multi-culturalism. As Will Kymlicka argues, the fundamental challenges which the theory of liberal state will face in the wake of globalization is to identify some new sources of unity in a democratic multi-cultural state.

29.14 SUMMARY

In tlie foregoing part of this unit, we have highlighted live main points in an attempt to spell out the contours of political theory in the era of globalization.

First, that both Liberalism and Marxism have lost their pre-eminence as explanatory ideologies. The interface of state, society and market is evolving in a way where there is hegemony of the market. The challenge of post-modernism has questioned some of the basic tenets of modern political theory like "the meta narrative" and broad categories like "class". Given this scenario, it seems that political theory in the era of globalization is going to be some sort of a synthesis of Liberalism, Marxism and Post-Modernism.

Secondly, in tlie wake of globalization, the whole notion of state sovereignty is getting compromised. The external aspect of state sovereignty is being hampered due to tlie increasing role of IMF, World Bank and the multi-nationals. The internal aspect of state sovereignty is also under threat due to the increasing role of non-governmental organizations, rising protest movements and increasing consciousness of masses, demands for greater transparency in government functioning and tlie right of information.

Thirdly, the emergence of identity politics is attracting greater and greater attention of political thcorists. The phenomenon of globalization and the rise of identity politics will lead to individual's decentralized loyalty. On the one hand, identity politics will lead sub-state loyalty and on the other hand, globalization will lead to individuals' greater supra-state loyalty. As a consequence of this twin phenomenon, tlie loyalty to tlie nation state will get compromised.

Fourthly, in the era ofglobalization, political theory will have to address itself to the phenomenon of growing ethnic conflicts, rising fundamentalism, increasing intolerance and dominance of majorities leading to the marginalisation of minorities.

Finally, the traditional notion offederalism as a mix of *self-rule and shared-rule* will have to be seen in a new light in the wake ofglobalization. The notion of 'ethnic federalism' will become central in political theory due to the challenge of multi-culturalism. In fact, due to these emerging challenges of multi-cultural is^^^ to the liberal state, it will have to look for some new sources of unity and new bases for buying legitimacy. Political Theory has today to address itself to these developments.

29.15 EXERCISES

I) What is Identity Politics?

2) What will be the impact of globalization on state sovereignty?

3) How will globalization affect the prevalent conceptions offederalism?

4) Identify the major contours of Political Theory in the era of globalization.